NOTES AND COMMENTS

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Natural and Artificial Death

"EVERYTHING flows, nothing abides." All forms are fugitive and evanescent, subject to perpetual change and final decay. This is visibly true in the physical world, and experience testifies that our habitual states of consciousness are as fluid as water. As the Buddhists have taught, death is the necessary complement of birth. There is a twilight, it is said, even for the gods.

The spectacle of this universal flux has suggested many sad thoughts to the poets, especially to those who have been captivated by the loveliness of so many earthly forms. It has always been a favourite, almost a conventional theme of lyric verse. *Eheu fugaces!* Very few men in any age have discerned the stable and changeless noumenal Reality beyond the veil of phenomena. The vast majority, including many who should know better, refuse to think of these matters at all, except under dire compulsion. Even among the clergy, there are those who shun the idea of death like the plague, and who, in this respect, therefore, are morally inferior to the ancient Stoic whose doctrine of self-control prepared him to die, perhaps without hope but nevertheless with dignity and without shameful fear.

However, Time is a moving image of Eternity, as Plato said. According to the Mystery Tradition which the Master Christ and other Avatars and Sages have illustrated before the world, "God did not make death". *Deus non fecit mortem.* What may be called *natural* death is thus merely the transition from one phase of being to another, the end of an old cycle which blends into the beginning of a new. It is, therefore, as "natural" as the indrawal of a tree's life to the roots during winter, or as the suspension of the body's outer activities during sleep. It is not death at all, if by this term we signify some loss of real consciousness, some permanent atrophy of creative power.

The death which man dreads and which he identifies with the destruction of

all he holds dear, may be described as *artificial*, in the sense that man has made it himself. It has, so to speak, entered like a foreign body into the organism of Nature. It seems evident that this artificial death is the logical consequence of an artificial life. It is the end to be expected for the "personality" which man fashions out of a congeries of illusions and false notions concerning himself and the Universe to which he belongs. Theosophy teaches that it is this "personality" which fades out after the death of the physical body, and that there must ensue a series of such deaths followed by as many reincarnations, each involving a lapse of memory, an eclipse of the sense of continuous identity, until "cyclic evolution has re-established the broken harmony between the two natures—the terrestrial and the divine".

The Two Aspects of Shîva

In the light of this teaching, one can perhaps begin to understand, in some slight degree, part of what the Buddha meant when he referred to Nirvana as the place from which there is no return. The Bodhisattva transforms himself without cessation into an ever more perfect image of the "Buddha-ideal", but he is freed from the dominion of "artificial death", from the particular type of reincarnation to which man must conform as long as he tries to live outside the order of Divine Nature.

In Hindu mythology, the great god Shîva, one of the principles of universal Nature (the third person of the Hindu Trinity), has two aspects. He is the Destroyer, and also the Regenerator. As the former, he often seems to represent for certain fanatics and perverted minds, what has been named the "night-side of Nature". He is, in this aspect, a personification of destruction conceived as an end in itself. He presides over every calamity, devouring whatever he touches, whether it be good or evil. But as the Regenerator, he is the patron of Yogîs and ascetics, of all who seek, through the elimination of evil from their natures, "to re-establish the broken harmony" in their lives. Like Yâma in the *Katha Upanishad*, he is the Lord of Death who can bestow the gift of conscious immortality.

There is a saying of the old magicians, that "man is the thaumaturge of the earth". He can evoke any force in Nature, and according to the quality and strength of his imagination, desire and will, that force will operate in and through him, for good or for ill. It is well to remind ourselves that, at every instant of the day, we are calling upon Shîva for re-inforcement. To which aspect do we appeal, to the Destroyer or to the Regenerator?

The Creators and the Destroyers

Madame Blavatsky points out what should be obvious, that life is maintained by a balance between creative and destructive powers. "Nothing is born into this world, save by the death of some other thing." Within every organism there is a continuous process of molecular displacement and cellular change. The form of the body can only be built and preserved, if its substance be unremittingly consumed by living fire.

We are taught that every physiological change, in addition to pathological phenomena, diseases—nay, life itself, or rather the objective phenomena of life, produced by certain conditions and changes in the tissues of the body, which allow and force life to act in that body—that all this is due to those unseen "Creators" and "Destroyers", which are called, in such a loose and general way, microbes. It might be supposed that these Fiery Lives and the microbes of Science are identical. This is not true. The Fiery Lives are the seventh and highest subdivision of matter, and correspond in the individual with the One Life of the Universe, though only on that plane of matter. The microbes of Science are the first and lowest subdivision on the second plane—that of material Prana, or Life. The physical body of man undergoes a complete change of structure every seven years, and its destruction and preservation are due to the alternate functions of the Fiery Lives, as Destroyers and Builders. They are Builders by sacrificing themselves, in the form of vitality, to restrain the destructive influence of the microbes, and by supplying the microbes with what is necessary, they compel them under that restraint to build up the material body and its cells. They are Destroyers also, when that restraint is removed, and the microbes, unsupplied with vital constructive energy, are left to run riot as destructive agents (*The Secret Doctrine*, ed. 1893, I, 282-283).

"As above, so below." The laws of evolution are fundamentally identical upon all planes. The creation or destruction of a human character illustrates these principles as clearly as the transformations of the human body. There is an analogy between the "Fiery Lives" and the "seventh and highest subdivision" of every individual consciousness, the plane of the purest ideals which, like the "Fiery Lives", make manifest the "One Life of the Universe", the ideals which we most truly love and which kindle into flame our will and aspiration. We know, even from our limited experience, that moral and mental disintegration is held in check whenever there is a sincere aspiration by any man to embody the highest purpose which he can conceive. As the Sages have taught, he who is afire with disinterested love of an ideal, does not decay with his physical body. He is, in his own individuality, immune to "microbes", for he subjects to a creative purpose whatever enters the field of his consciousness. Is it not the secret of real growth, that throughout all cyclic mutations it progressively illustrates an ideal form, a noumenon, an inner principle, a *Logos?*

Microbes in the Body Politic

For the race and nation, as for the individual, creative action depends upon the recognition of such an inner principle and upon the continued act of self-sacrifice, "in the form of vitality", which makes possible the impression of an ideal form upon "matter". It is painfully apparent that the general average of so-called human beings has always been incapable of individual creative effort. But the elemental state of this "Neolithic Mass", as Mr. Cram calls it, has only effectively checked the growth of a civilization, when authority and control over it have been taken away from the few who have preserved some understanding of its inner principle. When the standards of the "Neolithic Mass" become dominant in a society, a condition occurs which seems to correspond to what happens when a physical body is delivered to the unchecked ministrations of the microbes that populate it. The body politic serves as the host for myriads of undeveloped entities which, left to themselves, cannot build but

can only tear down what already exists. When the process of the "re-distribution of wealth" is completed, even the simulacrum of civilization disappears. Whatever was real in the old civilization will have resumed its series of reincarnations elsewhere.

When the inner principle of a civilization ceases to act effectively, because there is no longer a vision or an aspiration or a spirit of self-sacrifice which responds to it, the "body" which is left can only live as long as it can feed upon itself. This is made clear in a passage from *The Secret Doctrine*, following what has just been quoted. Incidentally, this passage suggests an interesting parallel between the effects of the "re-distribution of wealth" upon the life of a nation and the physical corruption which ensues when the cells of the body begin to rob one another of oxygen.

> The restraining influence of the Fiery Lives on . . . the microbes is confirmed by the fact mentioned in the theory of Pasteur . . . that the cells of the organs, when they do not find sufficient oxygen for themselves, adapt themselves to that condition and form *ferments*, which, by absorbing oxygen from substances which come in contact with them, produce their destruction. Thus the process is commenced by one cell robbing its neighbour of the source of its vitality, when the supply is insufficient; and the destruction so commenced steadily progresses.

Inflammation of the Intellect

It is commonly stated to-day that we are living in the most vital age since the beginning of history. The idea is, of course, suggested by the extraordinary achievements of applied science, which are still multiplied almost daily, as well as by the ever-accelerated *tempo* of social change to which we are obliged to adapt our fashion of living from hour to hour. A little reflection, however, should bring the realization that rapid change is not necessarily a sign of rapid growth. Decay can proceed at least as quickly as growth.

Destruction may wear the appearance of creation, as a fever may impart to its victim a semblance of renewed animation. Several observers of contemporary societies have felt obliged to conclude that the moral life of modern man is constantly agitated because it is actively disintegrating. It is as if his creative faculties had become over-specialized by their excessive concentration upon problems of physical invention. So much mental energy has been devoted to the exploitation of the material world that when men are compelled by circumstances to decide even a simple moral problem they find it increasingly difficult to think clearly or to make any decision. To excuse their failure, they frequently find it convenient to pretend that no permanent ethical standards exist.

Certain modern educators issue statements from time to time, which suggest that their chief objective is to undermine any faith in moral values which the youth entrusted to their charge may possess. "My idea of education", the President of the University of Chicago was recently quoted as saying, "is to unsettle the minds of the young and to inflame their intellects." So one might argue that the aim of a physician is to make people sick. Dr. Hutchins's remark is unfortunately typical of the sort of reasoning which prevails among the more

vocal educators of to-day, if not among the majority. It indicates the degree to which destructive has displaced constructive thinking in all branches of human activity, with the exception of the exact sciences. Men do not try to "inflame their intellects" when they compute strains and stresses. The engineer is one of the very few stabilizing influences in the modern world, at least in so far as he confines himself to the sphere of his science, where he recognizes eternal principles and obeys them. When he ventures to discuss ethics or sociology, he is, of course, capable of uttering as many imbecilities as anyone else.

A Defence of Nightmares

The ancient Hindu psychologists taught that there are three primary states of consciousness in Nature, the waking, the dreaming and the dreamless. All men know the first two which correspond to the physical and psychic or subjective phases of our ordinary life. Only a few, a very few, have knowledge of dreamless consciousness in a personal sense, although, according to this Eastern doctrine, every soul enters this condition in deep sleep. Before dreamlessness can be understood, the dream-world must be conquered. That is man's immediate task as it has been for ages.

To dream means more than to pass into the state, best known during sleep, when the outer senses are numbed and the subjective world of our mind-images assumes a temporary objective form. To dream, in the broader sense of the term, is to imagine, to reflect in a mental image, usually more or less distorted, some actual existent thing in physical nature, or some spiritual reality which has its being in the Nature above and beyond the sphere of dreams. Men dream continually, whether their eyes be open or shut. Everything depends upon the substance of their visions, upon the quality of the things mirrored.

There are nightmares, for instance, states of delirium, which have been traditionally supposed to be undesirable. It remained for an Episcopalian Bishop to assure us that nightmares are better than no dreams at all, that the important thing is to dream about something, no matter how terrible. We quote from the *New York Times*, July 29, 1935:

> The Right Rev. Warren L. Rogers, Protestant Episcopal Bishop of Ohio, in a sermon at St. Bartholomew's Church, after asserting that America needed a more definite social faith, praised Communist Russia, Nazi Germany and Fascist Italy for setting definite social objectives. After referring to patriots who had the faith to make their dreams come true, Bishop Rogers said:
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> "So men dream in our day. They are dreaming in Russia that way now. We may not like their dream, but certainly it is giving a meaning, a purpose in life the Russian peasant never had before. It is the audacity of his faith. They are doing the same thing in Germany and Italy. We do not have the same type of imagination, or else the dreams of our patriots have ceased. But we will one day dream in America. We will have the audacity of faith, the daring faith to believe."

One wonders whether the Bishop has the least notion what Christianity is about, or what is really occurring in Russia and Germany. If one were to seek illustrations of the destruction of the body politic by "microbes", one would

instinctively turn first of all to those unhappy lands. They are examples of living death, of a moral decay which has taken place under the eyes of the world and has virtually run its full course during one generation. How has all this come to pass? By the power of dreams; but of what dreams! Dreams of envy and malice, of revenge and wounded self-esteem, of blood-lust and sadist cruelty! The Germans and Russians appealed to the Destroyer, and he has answered.

The Chemical Revolution

It is not fair to say that Americans do not also have dreams of "social objectives", although they are less proficient in the art of generating nightmares than the Germans and Russians. It is characteristic of the American's attachment to concrete tangible goods, that he tends to look to applied science for the final solution of all social problems. It is seriously believed by many that technological improvements, coupled with new discoveries, will ultimately make it possible for every member of society to live in security and comfort, with a minimum of labour and a maximum of leisure, his most burdensome task being to choose how he will amuse himself.

There is an article in *Harper's Magazine*, August, 1935, which lends a certain appearance of substantiality to the notion that before many years will have elapsed the food supply of the world will be greatly increased by chemical means. It bears the formidable title: "Chemistry Wrecks the Farm". The authors, Messrs. Wayne W. Parrish and Harold F. Clark, do not consider the possible effects of this chemical revolution upon human consciousness. They are concerned with what is actually happening to agriculture and with certain immediate economic effects.

As they suggest, the productivity of the soil has been greatly increased during recent years by intensive cultivation, and it is estimated by experts that American agriculture is "only 11.3 per cent efficient to-day on the scale of the most efficient methods". Also there is a steady increase of synthetic foods produced in the laboratory and the factory. Finally, there is the most serious threat of all to the farmer, the transfer of farming itself to the laboratory and the factory.

> Controlled agriculture . . . opens the way to fresh crops every few weeks all the year round. Since soil is almost useless anyway, the plants are grown without it in metal trays in ovenlike cabinets. The plants supply their own heat, and only a few hours of work daily are needed to supply water to the trays, in which have been placed a few ounces of chemical food in powder form, there being a different chemical food for each kind of crop. These cabinets, each containing ten trays, providing a fresh crop every day with a ten-day rotation, are finding increased popularity on farms in England, Denmark, and Germany, where they are used for growing fodder crops. . . . The crop grows miraculously. A tray of seed-corn begins to sprout within a few hours and in ten days is a foot high. The seed germinated is said to produce five times the volume of seed planted in the ground. . . . Experiments are being conducted in England in the growing of fresh vegetables, with the prediction that the time is not far off when the householder can grow his own year-round supply of greenstuffs in his kitchen or basement in a cabinet resembling an ice-box or electric refrigerator.

There are some people who find the whole process of growing plants without

soil or sunlight repellent and fundamentally unsound in principle. It is at least plausible to assume that certain indispensable properties are imparted to vegetation by direct sunlight, which can be imparted in no other way. It is not improbable that time itself, however inconvenient it may be, is likewise a factor in developing the nutritive values of plants. We know very little about these things, far less than we think we do. It is conceivable that a race of men living upon this metal-tray diet, would shortly become as abnormal, as sunless as the poor vegetables themselves. Incidentally, it might be argued, whenever man converts a plant or animal into a monstrosity, he fails in his duty towards the lower kingdoms and sins against the order of Nature.

Nature is capable of many ironies. It is not unimaginable that the last act of this civilization might be the apparent settlement, once for all, of the age-old problem of providing sufficient physical food for everybody. It would then be necessary for men to prove that they could continue to live without spiritual food, for there is no sign that the chemical revolution will help them in this respect. As a matter of fact, the worry and strain which follow through life the man who must somehow earn his bread, may be his only preservation from insanity. If he be delivered from these, he can lose his sole claim to human dignity. In any event, even our own declining civilization would be preferable to one where material abundance seemed to be assured for ever, but counterbalanced by an equally assured condition of spiritual dearth. Imagine a government whose primary function would be to regiment "recreation" for everybody! If the citizens of that Utopia did not find relief from boredom by tearing one another to pieces, a natural calamity, like that which destroyed Atlantis, would be reserved for them.

The Ideal of the Knight-Errant

Certainly a real civilization may be said to be always the creation of a dream, but this dream cannot be of a mere physical Utopia, communist or fascist or scientific. A civilization is not an easy thing to create, as becomes evident if we reflect upon the labour and pain which alone made possible the re-birth of Europe during the centuries of night that separated the twilight of the Roman Empire from the dawn of mediæval culture. The labour and pain were assumed by those who were willing to sacrifice themselves, "in the form of vitality", for the sake of a positive Christian ideal which they never lost from view in the midst of the blackness. Legend, which may reveal facts that academic history overlooks, recorded this victory of light over darkness in the *chansons de geste*, the great Arthurian cycle, and the tales of knight-errantry.

It is significant that the knight-errant or his counterpart appears in the epic poetry of all races as a light-bearer in some age of darkness. It is he who is ever ready to respond to the call of beauty and truth in distress, and who fights alone and unaided against the dark powers personified by sorcerers and dragons and giants. But though he is most often seen as a solitary figure traversing a wilderness, he is yet not as lonely as he seems, for he belongs in fact to a brotherhood, to a fraternity of heroes. Some of the most moving scenes in the romances

of chivalry represent two of these men meeting, recognizing each other, exchanging a few grave courtesies, and then riding off again on their separate ways.

Centuries passed, and the dream of the knight-errant, the ideal of selfless dedication to the beautiful and true and good, began to seem unreal. The genius of Cervantes has left an enduring record of this fading of a vision. Don Quixote, the Knight of the Sad Countenance, is one of the most tragic figures in literature. He tried to re-live the *chansons de geste*, and failed amid universal ridicule and contempt. Even his creator dared not represent him otherwise than as a lunatic. But the mediæval audience did not imagine that Percivale or Roland or Amadis de Gaule was insane. Herein lies one distinction between the mediæval and the modern points of view, a distinction which has become increasingly manifest since Cervantes's time. The men of the twelfth century were guilty of cruelty, violence, treachery, of any and every vice; but even the worst of them seem to have conceded some superiority to gentleness and honour and loyalty. Thus the ideal of the knight-errant was respected, though it was very rarely pursued. The men of the Renaissance had other dreams. They were bewitched by the possibilities of aggrandizement and sensuous gratification, which the re-discovery of forgotten arts and sciences, and the conquest of a new continent, opened before them. Any chivalric code which blocked their purpose inevitably became a subject for satire. To-day the exigencies of chivalry rest so lightly upon us that they are not even a subject for satire.

The Lost Canon of Proportion

One finds many references to-day in books, periodicals, newspapers, even in economic bulletins, to analogies between the political and social changes which we are undergoing and the phenomena of decadence as revealed by the study of earlier historical cycles, notably in Greece and Rome. It would be well to balance the thoughts thus suggested by a course of reading which might help us to understand how the genius of civilization can be revived. We need only turn to a few of the greatest classics,—Confucius, the *Zend Avesta*, the *Bhagavad Gîta*, the Buddhist Suttas, Homer and Hesiod, Plutarch, the Romances of chivalry, St. Augustine, Dante, the New Testament.

What do these classics reveal? What is the "lost canon of proportion" which we vaguely sense in Gregorian music, in the temple at Pæstum and the cathedral of Chartres, in the painting of Giotto, in the life of St. Francis of Assisi? We must contemplate beauty and truth in a spirit like that of the knight-errant before we shall find the answer or be able to understand it, if it be given to us.

A penetrating study of the spiritual deficiency of the modern mind is presented in an article by M. J. Fiolle on "Machinism and the Spirit of the Contemporary Sciences", *Le Machinisme et l'Esprit des Sciences Contemporaines*, in the *Mercure de France*, July 1, 1935. M. Fiolle suggests that the excesses of applied science, the horrors of the machine age, are not an accidental by-product of pure science; that, on the contrary, the spirit of pure science and the spirit of applied science are identical because they originated in the same state of mind,

in the humanism and rationalism which began definitely to colour European thought during the fourteenth century and became dominant in the sixteenth, through the two-fold medium of the Renaissance and the Reformation. His most interesting point is that humanism and rationalism did not begin as expressions of revolt against "mediævalism", although later they clearly assumed the appearance of rebellion. They came into being rather as the result of men's desperate efforts to find some substitute for a metaphysical vision which they had lost. They were invented, as it were, to satisfy the human need for some kind of religion. As the intuition of the Divinity in Nature and man became dim, there began a frantic search for some object upon which devotion could be lavished. The object which they found was human nature as a thing-in-itself; and it is to human nature that the leaders of Occidental thought have burned incense ever since, even when there has been the pretence that homage was being offered to the Divinity. It might be noted that the same substitution of man for God has occurred many times in history, in China, in Egypt, in India, in Greece. It marks the moment when a civilization begins to decline, because it signifies an obscuration of the purpose for which that civilization exists. "The age of retrogression commences, and the work of the Fiery Lives exhausting their strength, the work of destruction and decrease also commences."

We quote some of M. Fiolle's reflections, suggesting that special attention should be paid to his explanation of the principal cause of the failure of mediæval man to preserve the spiritual treasure which he had accumulated.

> We cannot explain the sixteenth century by the too easy assumption that there was a "monstrous development" of the sciences, for this development came only three centuries later. No, the spirit only had changed, though hesitantly as yet and merely sketching a tendency. . . . For profound reasons, the soul of the Middle Ages was exhausted, and when man finds himself deprived of one of the necessary elements of his life, he always discovers in himself or about himself a means of supplying what he lacks. . . . Let us see if it be possible to discern the reasons for the enfeeblement, if not the total disappearance of the spiritual forces which leave so unique an imprint upon the Middle Ages. First, let us recognize that what is called "spirituality" does not always have an isolated existence or . . . precise contours. Spirituality impregnates, in various degrees, the most realistic conceptions, our most positive science, and even the acts of those who, if they paid any attention to it, would despise it the most. There is no human act absolutely withdrawn from this dominion, just as absolute blackness apparently does not exist. . . . But there is a form of spirituality which is characterized by a certain intensity in the attitude of the soul, by a determined metaphysical point of view; and the supreme expression of this attitude is realized in ecstasy, that is to say, in the "direct knowledge" of that which escapes the reason. . . . This mysticism and this spirituality [of the Middle Ages] were bathed in the atmosphere of Catholicism. Certainly, it is without doubt true that human thought was never more free than during these centuries which we understand so little. . . . But the liberty of mediæval man was exercised, without his even suspecting it, within the limits and under the action of religious dogma; although there was not even here any restriction, for there is no restraint where there is free acceptance. . . . Spirituality and Catholicism were virtually one. Thus one ends by suspecting that if spirituality underwent a decline, the cause must be sought in an internal, perhaps momentary disorganization of Catholicism during that epoch. . . . To proceed directly to the point, I shall simply remark that *at the end of the Middle Ages*

the Church suffered from an excess of temporal power. . . . The spirit of the Middle Ages disappeared or was temporarily eclipsed, because this spirit, devoted to "direct knowledge", was identified with the structure of Catholicism, and because Catholicism itself, the victim of its too brilliant success in the temporal domain (which is not its proper realm), lost in secret vigour what it gained in material authority.

Materialism thus entrenching itself at the summit of mediæval society, gradually conquered, virtually, the whole domain of the Western mind, with the result that to-day we have "religions" of science, of social-mindedness, of fascism, of communism, of racism, of pacifism, of everything except the Real. As M. Fiolle points out, there is but one way of escape. We must recover the art of "direct knowledge" of spiritual things. We must regain the use of the intuitive senses which we have allowed to become dormant. This does not mean the disappearance of science any more than it means the suppression of the faculty of reason. It merely signifies that science must cease to be a "religion", that it must return to a secondary position in the scale of values, where it will no longer usurp the prerogatives of intuitive wisdom.

The Quest of Direct Knowledge

There are more advantages than we realize in being alive during this age of the world. If we so will, the quickened *tempo* of decay can be converted into an equal *tempo* of creation. It is most significant also, as has been said, that men of science themselves, after centuries of materialistic speculation, have reached the conviction that the material world is not a thing-in-itself but a void, which must be filled by consciousness before it can be said even to exist. Such a conception of the voidness of the world has come to other men in other epochs, most often towards the end of a cycle before the commencement of another period of exfoliation. One recalls the doctrine of *sunyata* or emptiness which inaugurated the most brilliant period in Buddhist philosophy, and the Neoplatonic identification of "pure matter" with absolute non-being.

"Spirituality in its religious as in its other forms, is a rare flower which can only open in the atmosphere of concentration." That is what Theosophy, under many aspects, has taught through the centuries. The modern world, with all its plans and agitations, is as empty as the "elementals", the "microbes", which are disrupting the dead forms from which the Spirit has departed. But the eternal principles upon which all living forms of beauty and truth are based, can be found now as always by those who seek ardently enough, enveloping themselves in "the atmosphere of concentration". They can never be found by social planning or by regimentation of any kind. The quest of "direct knowledge" can only be accomplished by a group of free individuals united, like the knights-errant of the Dark Ages, by a common devotion to an ideal and to a Master. Then once again it will be possible to fill the void with *true* dreams, with images of the divine possibilities in man and Nature, for a new understanding of the "lost canon of proportion" will have been acquired. Thus man may advance one stage further towards the attainment of "Normal Clairvoyance" which, according to *The Secret Doctrine*, is the next sense to be developed.

FRAGMENTS

BLESSED are those who, in advancing years, see with dim eyes a light on their horizon, hear with dim ears a Voice that calls and calls; and seeing, hearing, rise and seek and follow, though their steps be slow and wavering, —groping hands outstretched in the gathering darkness, while the chilled heart beats fitfully.

Blessed are they; for those of the eleventh hour received each man his penny.

Blessed are they who, in the meridian of life, in the heat and dust of the market-place, catch a reflection of the light that never was on sea or land, or the echo of a melody played on a Shepherd's pipe to lure some wandering sheep back home again. And who then arise and follow, leaving their dreams of ambition and wealth, leaving the familiar, the attained, the long-desired, for more distant dreams, and vaguer,—for sounds heard only within, and often lost.

Blessed are they, whatever their toil, for great shall be their reward.

Blessed, aye blessed are they, who, in the early dawn of life and consciousness, turn eager eyes and ears and hearts to the lights they see in the rippling lights of sunshine, to the Voice which is the undertone of all sweet sounds, piercing with inner joy each opening sense, thus closing them all to outer expression for ever.

Blessed, aye blessed are they, whatever burden of sorrow they carry; for my burden, saith One, is easy,—who should know, who makes it easy; since the sense of Him, in presence or absence, is the essence of all delight.

CAVÉ.

THEOSOPHY

INSPIRATION AND INCARNATION*

IT HAS been our custom, at the opening meeting of each season, to speak of the Society itself, of what it is, and particularly of what it is not, and also to speak, in a very general sense, of Theosophy, and what we, who are members of the Society, mean by that term.

First, of the Society: it is quite venerable now, even if we look only to its present incarnation, going back to 1875. It has often been pointed out that the intervening years have revolutionized the intellectual atmosphere of Western culture, and that one result of this has been partially to obscure the significance of the principles on which our Society was founded. It is easy to-day, when the world is largely indifferent to all matters of religion, to command religious tolerance. It was not so easy a half century ago, when matters of belief were matters of moment—to the world, even as they have always been of profound moment to us—and The Theosophical Society had to grow up in the middle ground of very bitter controversy between the dogmatism of religion and the equal dogmatism of an adolescent and very bumptious science, each vociferous with the most definite assertions as to what was, and what was not, eternal truth. It is the more noteworthy, therefore, that the Society has, from its foundation, sought to get behind all self-assertive partisanship, and to establish and maintain a free and open platform. It has no dogma, nor creed, nor personal authority, nor set forms of belief which it desires to impose. No member can commit it in matters of belief. Each of us speaks here for himself, presenting his own individual view of life and truth. None of us can say with authority, "*This* is Theosophy; *this* is what the Society believes."

But this does not mean that we have not, in these sixty years, arrived at some very definite conclusions from our studies and experiments, or that we are ourselves without proof of what we may advance, to others, as but a possible hypothesis. The exact opposite is the fact, and our restraint of statement is more properly attributable to the awareness and experience we have gained of something which we find too big to be expressed to our satisfaction in any single set of terms or formulas. The word "Theosophy" signifies Divine Wisdom, or wisdom of divine things, and The Theosophical Society is a society formed to seek such wisdom, which must be something much more than a mere collection of words. The more that we gain of wisdom, the less willing we become to substitute formulas for it, and we strive to use words only as pointers to a Truth which lies behind them, and which every man must learn to see for himself before it can be of value to him. A fourfold activity results, which has been described as beginning in an intellectual attitude toward truth, and passing

* From the stenographic notes of a recent address by Mr. H. B. Mitchell at a meeting of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society.

thence into a practical method of looking for it, and an ethical spirit of obedience to it, until at last it becomes a religious life, in unison with it.

"Theosophy", Divine Wisdom: to-day neither "wisdom" nor "divinity" are words that the world commonly uses, or that it understands very well. "Worldly wisdom", yes. It thinks it knows what that means; but "Divine Wisdom", or "Wisdom" in and of itself, how can the world know of that? What is meant by "divine"? We may well hesitate to attempt a definition; but there are at least certain ways in which we, as members of the Society, would not use it, and one of them is the way in which I heard it used the other day in a restaurant: "Is not this chicken salad too utterly divine!" Yet even this devotee of salad would doubtless have given intellectual assent to the proposition that it could not be more than one aspect of divinity, that there was something more to divinity than had been compacted in the dish before her; and as we reflect upon the other uses to which we hear the word put, we see that the same comment applies to them. However we use it, we are but using part of it. Whatever else divinity may be, whatever else we may mean by a body of divine wisdom which the Society seeks to serve, we must recognize that the word always points to something that transcends our ordinary life and experience and our ordinary formulas; and that though it may permeate them all, and be truly nearer than hands and feet, yet it can never be confined, never be wholly revealed in any one of its manifestations. There is always more beyond what we reach. Transcendence and infinitude are thus characteristics which divinity cannot lack, and this is why our Society, which seeks the divine, cannot have dogmas or creeds, nor be content with formulas. For the thing we seek, and the thing we have *found*, in part at least, in these years of search, is something which we know transcends the form in which we have found it. It transcends, and we know it must ever transcend, our capacity to hold it, or to express it; and though it may live here to-night in what each speaker says, we know that it is infinitely greater than what any man can ever say.

So much for the word "divine", the first half of our name. What of the second half, "wisdom"? Mr. Johnston used constantly to remind us that *theou sophia* did not mean divine knowledge, but divine wisdom. The word for knowledge is *gnosis*, not *sophia*, and if we try to distinguish between the two, we shall find that wisdom of necessity involves an implication of wise action. Wisdom can never be mere theory. A man is not wise who has only acquired knowledge. To be wise by virtue of being learned, he must have reached the point where he has so assimilated knowledge as to have made it part of himself, and to have distilled from it a spiritual essence that guides his acts. Therefore our name "Theosophy", *theou sophia*, implies two things: first, the power to reach up to something which is truly divine, and which, as such, transcends our ordinary being; and, second, the power to bring that something down into wisdom, into manifestation and action, to concrete application in the affairs of everyday life. These twin powers are, respectively, the power to be inspired, and the power to incarnate our inspiration, and by coming to understand them we can come to an understanding of Theosophy.

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To avoid any appearance of reasoning in a circle, let us make a new approach to our theme, which will not start from the Society, but rather lead us to it from the broad starting ground of our common human nature. If we ask ourselves what is the most fundamental characteristic of human life, the answer might well be that it is *alive*. Now the more we study life, the more obvious it becomes that it is never wholly self-contained or limited to the vehicle which, for the time being, manifests it. Whatever the present vehicle may be, the indwelling life is somehow capable of transcending it, of reaching out beyond it and drawing into itself, from without, influences that modify the vehicle, and little by little transform it. In short, we see that the most notable feature of our human life is that which it possesses in common with all of life—that which distinguishes life from death—the ability to open itself to the influx of energies from above itself, which, in terms of the human heart and mind and will, is *the capacity or power to be inspired*. That is not the aspect of human existence which is to-day most discussed and considered, but it is one which is well worthy of most careful consideration, for it leads us straight to the deepest potentialities of our personal lives and to that which alone makes them worth the living —their ability to open themselves to inspiration.

Let us pause long enough to clarify our use of the word "inspiration", as we had to pause over "divine" and "wisdom". It has a very long reach and rises to great heights, but to begin with, I shall not mean anything that is of necessity great or particularly remarkable. We shall not limit its use to a saint's inspiration, or a poet's or an artist's. It is something that acts also in and concerns you, whoever you are and just as you are. You yourself are entirely capable of reaching up to perceptions that you had not had before, and to will that you had not had before, and you daily do this, drawing into yourself understanding and will and truth that were no part of you a short time ago. You do it as naturally as a plant draws from the heat and light of the sun. You, too, and on every plane on which you are alive, draw into yourself something from without yourself,—something which you vitally need. You get new ideas, even as you get new energy.

Many years ago, in a meeting such as this, a friend asked us to consider whence came the ideas that were struck out in our discussion. If there had been a Customs inspector of mental luggage stationed at the door, who had opened and gone through our minds as a Customs inspector on the docks goes through one's trunks, he would not have found in our consciousness the ideas that we later expressed. How did we gain them? Whence did they come? The genesis of a new idea may seem a trivial thing, because it is so commonplace; but the very fact that it is commonplace makes its significance the greater. As the everyday phenomenon of a ray of sunlight falling on a single point, tells us of the whole blazing face of the sun, and of how all the heat and light are drawn that support life on earth, so in the birth of a new idea we may see, in little, the workings of the most momentous power in human existence,—the power to be inspired, whereby the human mind and heart and soul are lit and filled from above.

It is, as we have seen, to this power of inspiration that the name of our Society

points, and it is with the aspect of human nature that gives us this power, that The Theosophical Society and Movement are concerned. Whatever else divinity may be and man may be, there is clearly this connection between them, —there is in us something to which divinity can speak, something within our hearts or souls or consciousness which divinity can illumine with a beam from its own nature. It is, alas, true that not all that reaches us comes from above. There is inspiration's obverse, that we can be moved from below, and the patent fact that we are pressed upon and swayed by the psychic currents that really neither rise nor fall, but sweep aimlessly through the levels on which we choose to live. But none of this alters the outstanding fact that concerns us here —the fact of inspiration. There is nothing in the world more worth while than to pay heed to this fact, that we may learn how to utilize it and develop the power that it reveals. What do you do when you need new truth? What do you do when you need new strength or will or love? How many of you know what you actually do, let alone what is open to you to do? Truth comes to people, will comes to people—how? We have schools that teach all sorts of things—mostly at somebody else's expense—music and dancing and such economic theory as that "Society" owes you a living, and that the way to get rich is to spend; but how many schools teach people how to find their own inspiration, and how to develop the innate capacity, which they share with all of being, to draw from above and beyond themselves the quickening, transforming life they need? Here is one of the primary functions that our Movement was inaugurated to perform. As we have already pointed out, it can be correlated with the first half of our name, *theou*, that which is of God.

Whenever there is genuine inspiration, there is something that ought to be done about it. When you have been troubled over a friend, and have thought about him, and prayed about him, and done something for which there is no English verb but which means *loved* about him—so that you have somehow come to a better understanding of him through the sort of touch and union with its object which love can give—the whole process has its value for you through the light it sheds on what you ought to do. Inspiration always has that significant characteristic; it leaves with you an unequivocal imperative. If there is new truth that you have reached, it is, somehow or other, truth that must be obeyed or must be expressed. If there is beauty, it, too, is compelling. Somehow or other you must change that which is ugly into the likeness of this new vision. In inspiration you reach up to something which is dynamic and potent, and it insists on flowing down into you, and into the world around you, transforming whatever it touches, and making right what is amiss. There is always this compulsion to action, to manifestation, to the *incarnation* of inspiration (for that is what it actually is), so that what has inspired you may live in you and in what you do. One cannot observe one's inspirations, even casually, without being forced to realize that the spiritual world is indeed the *causal* world, the world of creative origins and causes, and that to come into contact with it is to broach a mighty force which acts, through the contact, upon oneself and one's whole environment.

If, as before, we associate this second, active, incarnating and transforming aspect of inspiration with the second half of our name—*sophia* or wisdom—we have a picture, which, however inadequate, is nevertheless essentially true, of the Theosophical Movement as concerned primarily with the central fact of human life: the capacity for inspiration, and the need to incarnate it.

If we go further, and examine in actual experience the effects to which this twin process leads, we see how the reaching up and the drawing down constitute an alternating cycle of inbreathing and outbreathing, of looking for guidance and of obeying it, which includes and exemplifies successively not only the intellectual attitude and practical method and ethical spirit that have been so often described as characteristic of Theosophy, but also and most strikingly, its religious and transforming life. For that sort of constant practice and discipline, the ceaseless looking for inspiration and then the whole-hearted effort to obey and incarnate it, does transform the whole being. It cannot help but do so. We are stubborn; we are slow; we are stupid; we are fixed and hardened in old habits; we are laden with matter which is resistant and does not respond easily. At times we are so incredibly light-minded that a mere passing breath of interest can divert us from our most momentous concerns. But nevertheless, little by little, the reaching up above ourselves, and then striving to act on the vision there attained, does transform our being, and we know it.

Here again, therefore, we are able to trace in our own experience, even if it be but on a very small scale, the action of a transforming power whose importance and ultimate potentialities for the destiny of humanity surpass all imagining; and we recognize it as the present, visible action of the Creative Spirit, of which all religions tell. It is part of the whole cosmic process of evolution and incarnation, which brought the manifested universe to being, and which, having made us what we are, must continue to act to make us what we are meant to be. It is the process of growth and of creative transformation, and here and now it acts, if men will but open themselves to it, to transform the natural man into the spiritual man, born from above, of which St. Paul speaks. For what determines the character of a man's being, save the centre from which his life is lived, save the character of that which fills and holds his heart and mind and will—the ideals which he pursues, the motives which animate him, and the character of his acts? And if all these be of the spirit, descended from above, is not the man's life drawn from the same centre?

If we give thought to following in detail the cycle of inspiration and incarnation as outlined above, we find that it involves, no longer as theory but as representative of immediate and practical factors with which we have to deal, all of the doctrines or postulates of what has come to be known as the theosophic philosophy. As it is said that in each atom the whole universe contrives to integrate itself, so in each genuinely creative act the whole of creation is reflected, and it is fascinating to watch a whole philosophy unroll with the movement of a single spiritual cycle. But that is a theme which we cannot pursue now, and I touch upon it only to the extent of a single example,—its bearing upon the theosophic doctrine of the seven principles of man. We encounter these principles,

practically, as the seven sheaths, or strata, through which consciousness has to rise to reach inspiration, and as the media, or vehicles, through which its incarnation and application must be made. All aspects of our nature have to be attuned to the truth we would know, and wherever the nature is not attuned, the truth we reach is, in that particular and to that extent, limited or distorted. The sevenfold nature of man is thus something like a lock, with seven wards, upon the door to the shrine of truth. Each must be passed before the door opens. But the simile is poor, in that, in reality, as each ward is passed, admittance is gained to some limited domain or aspect of truth. What must be specially stressed, however, is that the Divine Will—the inspiration of Truth or Beauty or Holiness—must be sought, not abstractly, but in order to incarnate and *obey it*. It is not sufficiently realized that the process of inspiration and incarnation is a single process whose two halves cannot be separated from each other. The cycle is a single cycle, through which the Divine Spirit acts like water flowing through a pipe. Block the pipe anywhere, and the flow stops everywhere. "I come to do Thy will; to know Thy will that I may do it." No other attitude can gain us access to the courts of Truth; and where inspiration fails we shall be wise to look to our willingness to obey. The readiness to put the whole of one's nature at the disposal of one's inspiration is essential to the reaching of truth—real truth and the whole truth.

How misleading and absurd the phrase is! To speak of reaching "the whole truth", as though, on the one hand, truth could be exhausted so that we had it all, or, on the other, as though truth could be anything but whole! In each fragment of truth there is the whole truth, as in each ray of light there is all light. The thing you get is whole unless you make it fragmentary. It mirrors Divine Truth unless there is some part which your nature rejects, something false to which you cling and which you will not open to truth. It is you yourself who make your truths limited and partial and false. Yet even if you did not so limit and falsify it, so that for you it was whole, even so it would not mean that you had exhausted truth, that what you had gained was exclusive, or that there was not more beyond.

Our subject is so large, and of such obvious and vital moment, that it is difficult to confine its discussion to such limits as our time must set, resisting the temptation to pursue any of its manifold ramifications. "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. . . . All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made. . . . And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us." The passage from the idea to its manifestation, from the potential to the actual, from the word to the deed, from inspiration to its incarnation, is the immemorial symbol of the action of the Creative Spirit, and it is this because it is more than a symbol; it is the thing itself. In it, there before us and within us, the Creative Spirit works. All of the great religions of humanity set forth ways in which man may co-operate with this action and open himself to it. Perhaps it matters little *which* way is followed. But it matters supremely that *a* way be employed, —that you do daily and steadfastly seek to gain inspiration and to incarnate

it in all you do. Perhaps any way will work if it be honest, and faithfully followed, and made your own; but *some* way each man must find, and use, and make his own, or else he shuts himself away from his highest heritage.

It is recorded in the Acts of the Apostles that the speech of those upon whom the Holy Ghost descended, the speech of the Spirit, was heard by each listener in his own language. As we look back through the records of mystical religion, we find this verified. To the saints and seers and sages of mankind, we find Divinity speaking in their own native tongue, and in terms and symbols familiar to them from their childhood,—and this whether it be to the Chinese lawgiver or the Rajput king, to the Hebrew prophet or the little French nun. The great overshadowing Spirit speaks to each in the wonted terms of his daily use and thought; but is there not tragedy in the realization that there are those who have no familiar images of spiritual things through which the Spirit can reveal itself and make known its will?

Think for a moment: you put out a letter box, and your friends, who have come to seek you and who find your door closed, drop their notes into that box, because that is what it is there for, and that is where you look. *Because* it is where you look, it is where messages intended for you are put. If you abandon it, and move elsewhere and no longer use the box, messages are no longer put there for you. It is the same in the inner world as in the outer. If you have an address, your friends use it—whatever it is. If you have no address, if there is nowhere that you look for messages, how are you to receive any?

This does not mean that any way of seeking inspiration is as good as any other; but it does mean that any way is better than no way. The great majority of men to-day have no way. They have no thought of inspiration, no belief in its possibility. The only speech to which they have habituated themselves, contains no words for the things of the Spirit, or that the Spirit could use. They have no letter box in which they ever look.

It is to such that the Theosophical Movement calls, and calls again, that Divine Wisdom exists and is obtainable, that inspiration is a fact, that the inner world of the Spirit, the kingdom of the heavens, is literally at hand. But largely it calls in vain; and the world sinks deeper and deeper into a cycle of materialism and darkness—Kali Yuga, as we call it—and a little handful of people are almost all who, in our Western civilization, are consciously concerned with this, the paramount fact and most momentous potentiality of human life.

Yet for this, too, Theosophy offers us explanation and reassurance. All things are under the great Law; all things move in cycles; and though a wave recede, the tide will rise. We must take long views if we are not to mistake the one for the other, or forget that even if the tide be ebbing, the flood will again follow it. We have spent our time this evening tracing the cycle of inspiration and its application in action. It mirrors for us cycle upon cycle of alternate inbreathing and outbreathing—of days and nights that mark the revolution of the earth or of the ages of Brahmâ. We are in the indrawing phase of a great as well as of a little cycle, and we should try to follow the current in,—not lament that it is not flowing out.

The process of inspiration is itself a process of indrawal. Always, to open your consciousness to Truth, you have to leave behind you your pre-occupation with the host of lesser things that have held your attention in the outer world,—your personal concerns, your little griefs and joys. You have to put away, equally, your prejudices and predilections, your ambitions and desires. You have, above all, to put away your fears. Your fears are deep, and persist, and rise up again and again after you think you have faced and fought and killed and buried them. This Path of Divine Wisdom is the warrior's path of courage. Its tradition is the heritage of a warrior race. You have to put fear away before you can follow it, or receive and obey the Divine Will for you in the place and the moment where you stand. All things of self must be put away, even, at times, what you think of as your duties. It was alone that Moses climbed mount Sinai to receive the Commandments. He left behind him the people for whom he was responsible and for whom he sought guidance. There has to be a Law-giver in one's nature which can leave all else behind it and ascend alone up the mountain and into the cloud, and come back with the law and enforce it. Inspiration from above is not drawn down by town meetings; the voice of the people was never yet the still, small voice. It is the lonely seer, the sage, the prophet, who goes apart into the desert, abandoning all else, who hears the Voice that is heard only in the Silence. And it is not our clamouring, personal natures, but the lonely seer within us, that is alone capable of receiving the descent of Wisdom from above. It is the spark of the Divine, hidden deep within, that has somehow to be freed from all the rest, until it rises back toward its source, and is again illumined by the Father's Will. Then, and then only, it descends again into the maelstrom which it must rule and order.

The Christian Master, speaking to his disciples, said that they had been called to be the salt of the earth. In each age there are, and must always be, those who have, to one degree or another, been taught of Truth that they may hold it as a trust for the need of the world, against the time when the world shall seek it, as now it rejects it. It is to this end, it seems to me, that those in the Theosophical Movement have been taught, and that in fulfilment of the trust that has been imposed in them, they, of all men, are called upon to live by the truth they have been shown, and to incarnate in their lives and actions the inspiration they have received. As we have been taught of the cycles, so should we try to live in accordance with them, and, in this indrawing cycle, learn to turn back from the world and its vagaries, its follies and confusion, to something that is eternal and sure, rising from the world of effects to the world of causes, from the self to the infinitely greater than self, to seek and find there the Divine Wisdom whose name we bear and whose servants we aspire to be. That trinity of search and finding and obeying, that twin process of inspiration and incarnation, is Theosophy.

CORNWALL AND ITS MAGIC

Strike for the King and live! his knights have heard
That God hath told the King a secret word.
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.

Strike for the King and die! and if thou diest,
The King is King, and ever wills the highest.
Clang battleaxe, and clash brand! Let the King reign.

The King will follow Christ, and we the King
In whom high God hath breathed a secret thing.
Fall battleaxe, and flash brand! Let the King reign.

TENNYSON: IDYLLS OF THE KING.

IT has never seemed to me necessary to go to a place physically, in order to be there actually, in the truest sense. Quite the reverse. We think of the glory of a sunrise seen many years ago from the peak of some high mountain, and we can live it all again with an added sense of glory, perhaps, because now we are no longer looking at it with our physical eyes, and to that extent we are free from the hindrances of the flesh. All must have experienced this. We read of the "fourth dimension", and many of us are saddened by the feeling that it is not for us; in some future incarnation, perhaps,—alas! not yet. But are we not experiencing at least a good imitation of "fourth dimensional life" a great part of the time, although we may not think of it in that light? Whenever imagination carries us backward from the trivialities of daily routine into the glowing atmosphere of ancient romance, or forward to some heavenly vision of the future, may we not think of it as in some sense a transfer in time and space? We may be sitting in an armchair, alone at our own fireside, quietly reading, and the memory of some loved spot may suddenly invade our consciousness. In a moment we have passed through the solid walls of our room; we have traversed great oceans and wide continents and are *there*—there at the old trysting place, gazing once more at all we loved and still love so well; moving silently amid old scenes. And when that moment comes, then we may hold real converse with our friends across the world—old, old friends and dear comrades, perhaps of centuries ago.

Once, on a summer afternoon (how vividly I remember it!) I wandered along the crests of the wild, dark cliffs which bound the ancient, sea-girt Duchy of Cornwall. It had been a fine warm day when I started, and I rejoiced in my solitude—I was alone with the sea and the sky. League on league of ocean, serenely infinite, stretched far away to a dreamy horizon; an infinite mid-summer sky brooded tenderly overhead. There is no place in the world, I think, where

you find waters so deeply sapphire as those which encircle this archaic land of magic and of mystery. The sunshine glanced brilliantly on the surface of the water, and as the great waves came rolling in they dashed themselves at the base of the mighty, towering cliffs, throwing up splendid fountains of spray—spray which the wind blows back like a fairy mist, and where rainbows linger and then vanish quickly, as dreams vanish. Entranced, I watched the sea gulls (there were hundreds of them); I watched the beautiful curve of their long wings, the beauty of their flight as they wheeled and turned, now near, now at a distance, weaving themselves into a lovely, rhythmic, aerial dance. They were a dazzling white in the clear sunshine, and sometimes, when they flew low, I could not distinguish them from the pure whiteness of the foam, as the waves broke far down on the jagged rocks which formed the coastline.

Anyone who knows Cornwall, however, also knows that anything may happen there at any moment (that is part of the magic), and before I realized it, a strong wind had sprung up, and, with it, heavy, sea-born clouds came racing in from the ocean, as though driven by Merlin himself; the sun was blotted out in the space of a few moments, and I found myself enveloped in an impenetrable fog. It was so dense that I could not see a yard ahead of me—I was indeed alone, and with the sense of complete isolation which a dense fog always seems to bring. It is very dangerous to walk along the top of those cliffs unless you can see every step of the way, for the ground is full of deep crevasses down which the unwary may easily tumble and never be heard of again; you may even walk right off the edge and fall from the dizzy height into an unimaginable abyss, a seething cauldron. The prospect was not enticing! So, doing the only sensible thing left to do, I sat down on a friendly, close-at-hand rock (I believe Merlin had put it there on purpose), quite realizing, none the less, that I might have to remain there all night, held a prisoner in Merlin's enchantment. A feeling of awe crept over me. No sound reached me from the unseen skies above, but from far below in the boiling, churning depths, the waves roared and broke and pounded at the base of those lonely cliffs on which I was sitting. Would they withstand the terrible impact of the giant strokes? Down there, I knew, under that surging water, lay the ancient, long-lost country of Lyonnesse, once a happy, sunny land peopled by busy, ancient folk who had perished in a moment of time when those very waves had swept so mercilessly over them—they say you can still hear the church bells ring on star-lit nights when the wind blows inland. Lyonnesse was the country of Sir Tristram, one of the staunchest of King Arthur's knights, and I wondered where he was now. But I wondered most about King Arthur himself, that perfect flower of knighthood—was he perhaps still in the island-valley of Avilion,

> Where falls not hail, or rain, or any snow,
> Nor ever wind blows loudly; but it lies
> Deep-meadowed, happy, fair with orchard lawns
> And bowery hollows crowned with summer sea,

—was he still there, remembering the glories of the past, lamenting the deadly wound which had not yet healed—biding his time?

More than any other, perhaps, this is King Arthur's country. He must often have knelt before the high Celtic crosses which are scattered in the fields and at the waysides. It is a land of eternal romance, and when you are there, it is not difficult to believe that Cornwall was chosen (surely by the Lodge itself), for chivalry's new venture in the unending warfare for the salvation of mankind, because it is a land of mystics. We sometimes speak, perhaps with a shrug, of the "visionary Celt", but it is this very Celtic nature, capable of living in two worlds at once, which must have seemed so promising: was it for that reason that the message was sent there with the hope that it might be heard and understood? Traditionally, it was Cornwall that saw King Arthur's "coming"—it was here that he was born. Here it was that Excalibur, with the inner power which accompanied it, was given him. And Cornwall it was which, sorrowing, watched the King's "passing". All the rest ("many-towered Camelot", Caerleon, "Joyous Guard" and the others), played each its several part, but only during the years that intervened. It may be thought by some that this world of the Order of the Round Table is a vanished world—why try to return to it now? A vanished world? How near it seems to some of us! It is still a realm of intense reality, and always will be, and you cannot pass a single day in Cornwall without meeting old friends:

> There stood the knights! stately, and stern, and tall;
> Tristan; and Percivale; Sir Galahad;
> And he, the sad Sir Lancelot of the lay:
> . . . . . .
> See! where they move, a battle-shouldering kind!
> Massive in mould, but graceful: thorough men:
> Built in the mystic measure of the Cross:—
> Their lifted arms the transome; and their bulk,
> The tree, where Jesu, stately stood to die!
> Thence came their mastery in the field of war:—
> Ah! one might drive battalions, one alone.
>
> See now, they pause;—for in their midst, the King!
> Arthur, the son of Uter and the night;
> Helmed with Pendragon; with the crested crown;
> And belted with the sheathed Excalibur,
> That gnashed his iron teeth, and yearned for war!
> Stern was that look: high natures seldom smile:
> And in those pulses beat a thousand Kings.

There can be little question, I think, that more than any other of the many and varied aspects of the Arthurian Romance, the Quest of the Holy Grail is the most haunting—no doubt because, unrealized in general by an over-busy world, that Quest continues to-day: under other forms, behind many disguises, perhaps—but it is the same Quest. It was not alone the romantic spirit of the Middle Ages which fostered it. So long as the heart of man thirsts for the Ideal, so long will the Quest endure; it is immortal, imperishable.

In making a closer study of the "Morte d'Arthur" than has been perhaps our wont, however, many of us come upon an obstacle which, at first, greatly puzzles

us, and past which we cannot seem to go. Why is it that, with the introduction of a theme so marvellous, so lofty as the Quest, the first foreboding note is heard, presaging something dark and fateful for the Order of the Round Table, as well as for King Arthur himself? Why is it that the knights of the Round Table—those men who, when the Order was founded, bound themselves by vows so strict, so exalted, "that when they rose knighted from kneeling, some were pale as at the passing of a ghost, some flushed, some dazed",—how is it that they could forget those vows, or allow their knightly code to fall into disuse? Arthur had told them that they were fighting for "our fair father Christ". With that understanding they had first taken their vows, and it was a result of forgetting these that King Arthur and the work he had tried to do was frustrated—it was not Arthur himself who forgot. We remember the first appearance of the Grail, though only one man actually *saw* it: how at Camelot "on a summer night it came to pass", that all were assembled in the great banqueting hall, the King alone being absent on a mission of mercy. It is Sir Percivale who, according to Tennyson, tells us of it:

> And all at once, as there we sat, we heard
> A cracking and a riving of the roofs,
> And rending, and a blast, and overhead
> Thunder, and in the thunder was a cry.
> And in the blast there smote along the hall
> A beam of light seven times more clear than day:
>
> And down the long beam stole the Holy Grail
> All over-cover'd with a luminous cloud,
> And none might see who bare it, and it past.
> But every knight beheld his fellow's face
> As in a glory, and all the knights arose,
> And staring each at other like dumb men
> Stood, till I found a voice and sware a vow.
>
> I sware a vow before them all, that I,
> Because I had not seen the Grail, would ride
> A twelvemonth and a day in quest of it,
> Until I found and saw it, as the nun
> My sister saw it; and Galahad sware the vow,
> And good Sir Bors, our Lancelot's cousin, sware,
> And Lancelot sware, and many among the knights,
> And Gawain sware, and louder than the rest.

When Arthur returned he was filled with consternation because, having learned to know his knights so well—their weaknesses and follies, despite their knighthood—he realized that most of them had taken vows which they could not and would not be able to keep, thereby making their failure the more serious. "Sir Gawaine, Sir Gawaine", he mourned, "Ye have set me in great sorrow, for I have great doubt that my true fellowship shall never meet more here again." Yet the knights who had sworn to seek the Grail were determined to keep that vow (and, of course, the King was the first to uphold their purpose, since, after

all, they had pledged themselves), and they set out upon the Quest, but Sir Gawaine, who had sworn "louder than the rest", was the first to fall a victim to the pleasures and vanities of the world. Individually, many did not survive the Quest at all: it was the working of the immemorial Law which demands that each must win through to the Kingdom of God for himself, or perish on the way. Many went in search of the Grail and never returned: too early they had made the attempt. Others started hopefully only to turn back or meet with failure at the last. Four only ever saw the Grail even from a distance, and for a moment —Sir Lancelot, Sir Bors and Sir Percivale, but it was impossible for them to speak of it to anyone; one alone actually found it: Sir Galahad whose purity had made his vision clear, and with that holy vision he passed from this world of darkness into the world of spiritual Reality. It was the searching purity of the Grail which was the undoing of all the others—they were not ready, and could not live in its blinding light. So, of all the knights who originally set out, but a few came back, and when they did return, they found that everything was altered, the old order of things had changed, and eventually, with the sinister entrance upon the scene of the treacherous Sir Mordred, the end quickly followed: the Battle of the West, the last great combat on the Cornish coast where King Arthur, with the knights who had remained true about him, faced the hordes of Sir Mordred, that traitor knight:

> So all day long the noise of battle roll'd
> Among the mountains by the winter sea;
> Until King Arthur's Table, man by man,
> Had fallen in Lyonnesse about their Lord,
> King Arthur: then, because his wound was deep,
> The bold Sir Bedivere uplifted him,
> Sir Bedivere, the last of all his knights,
> And bore him to a chapel nigh the field,
> A broken chancel with a broken cross,
> That stood on a dark strait of barren land.
> On one side lay the ocean, and on one
> Lay a great water, and the moon was full.
> Then spake King Arthur to Sir Bedivere:
> "The sequel of to-day unsolders all
> The goodliest fellowship of famous knights
> Whereof this world holds record. Such a sleep
> They sleep—the men I loved. I think that we
> Shall never more, at any future time,
> Delight our souls with talk of knightly deeds,
> Walking about the gardens and the halls
> Of Camelot, as in the days that were.
> I perish by the people which I made,—
> Tho' Merlin sware that I should come again
> To rule once more—but let what will be, be."

These words seem despondent enough! But Arthur confides to Sir Bedivere that, as a result of the failure of so many of his knights, and because of this last combat with Sir Mordred which seems to have ended everything, his "mind is

clouded with a doubt" concerning the ultimate outcome of the venture that he started. He is bewildered.

> I found Him in the shining of the stars,
> I mark'd Him in the flowering of His fields,
> But in His ways with men I find Him not.

Then he makes his last request: he asks for prayer; not for himself alone—*all* must be reached:

> For so the whole round earth is every way
> Bound by gold chains about the feet of God.

Then as a last act Excalibur is returned to the enigmatic source from whence it came, and the mysterious companions from another world appear, and carry the sorely wounded King away. Such is the "passing" of Arthur.

There are many, I know, who feel that the end of the Arthurian Romance is beyond words sombre, mournful, hopeless; that the sun which rose in such splendour upon an ideal venture, sinks at last in profound gloom. I have to confess that it has never seemed so to me. There can be no doubt that all which King Arthur set out to do was not accomplished, but he dealt with men of very uneven character, men with passions which warred all too successfully against the spiritual man within. For the most part they were not extraordinary men, but at least they had that within them which enabled them to recognize an ideal, to be fired by it, and to make an attempt to respond wholeheartedly to it. These would-be disciples (for we may surely consider them as such), were raised above the former level of their lives, and even if they were incapable of understanding to the full the greatness of King Arthur's mission, at least they made an attempt to serve it and to serve him. The radiant, blinding light of the Grail, so searchingly pure, precipitated their downfall; few could live in it. Yet when the end came (and this has always been a comforting thought), those who were left fought to the last man around their King; they died literally at his side—surely some good must have resulted from that! And something had been created—something which has continued to grow throughout the centuries. For it has often been remarked that the Age of Chivalry is not dead—the great War showed us that; men can still die nobly for a Cause they love; knighthood still lives on this earth.

There is an old tradition in Cornwall, often called to mind by the common fisher folk—a tradition which you may hear at any time for the asking: that King Arthur did not die; that he is alive to-day—somewhere unknown to men, and that in an hour of England's most desperate need he and his knights will come again, and that *this* time it will be an overpowering victory. These simple fisher folk believe it, just as Merlin himself believed it—why should not we? What we know of the Arthurian Romance was but one attempt: need we think of it as the *only* one?

The fog had lifted, but still I sat dreaming on that friendly rock. Over there

in the west the sun was setting in a blaze of glory, and soon it would have dropped beyond the rim of the world, and night would come, just as night had fallen on King Arthur still fighting on his last battlefield, close to this very spot. The strong, sweet air from the Cornish sea, the evening sights and sounds of the Cornish coast—everything reminded me of him. I was saddened by the remembrance of the glories of the past, even though I knew it was not possible that they could really have perished; they had only been withdrawn for a space, and they would come again. I got up from where I had been sitting all these hours and, climbing a grassy slope not far off, I looked out over an illimitable ocean, bathed in the evening light, and I remembered some lines which I had always loved, and which now seemed to hold a special promise—one I was eager to grasp:

Nay, come up hither. From this wave-washed mound
Unto the furthest flood-brim look with me;
Then reach out with thy thought till it be drown'd.
Miles and miles distant though the last line be,
And though thy soul sail leagues and leagues beyond,—
Still, leagues beyond those leagues, there is more sea.

WAYFARER.

Not of the sunlight,
Not of the moonlight,
Not of the starlight!
O young Mariner,
Down to the haven,
Call your companions,
Launch your vessel
And crowd your canvas,
And, ere it vanishes
Over the margin,
After it, follow it,
Follow the Gleam.

TENNYSON.

CONFUCIUS

I.

To find the central clue to our moral being which unites us to the universal order, that indeed is the highest human attainment. People are seldom capable of it for long.

CHUNG YUNG.

THE Chinese Empire outlived Chaldæa and Egypt, Greece and Rome. Chinese civilization has possessed, in eminent degree, what the biologists call "survival value". The future may be dim and incoherent, but it is none the less true that the essential continuity of Chinese history was virtually unbroken for at least four thousand years. There were dark intervals in that long cycle, but no prolonged "dark ages". In spite of plague and flood and famine, in spite of barbarian conquests and dynastic revolutions and recurrent political chaos, the nucleus of the racial life remained intact, and loyalty to the racial tradition was never wholly suspended.

Historians have suggested various reasons for the extraordinary stability of Chinese culture. Doubtless, as many argue, one very important factor was the isolation of China. Its neighbours were strong and warlike, but uncivilized. They might enter China as conquerors, but China quickly and easily assimilated them to the native population. Even when a powerful foreign influence like Buddhism penetrated the barriers of the Himalayas and the Gobi, its pervasion of Chinese thought was slow and gradual. When Buddhism finally established itself under the T'ang Emperors, it had lost its Indian appearance; it had become as characteristically Chinese in form as Confucianism or Taoism.

European and American traders and missionaries accomplished what Genghis Khan could not do. They destroyed the Empire as an entity, opening the gates of China to a flood of influences alien to its most fundamental traditions. We perceive the results in the chaos of to-day. The danger is that the most deep-seated of all Chinese traditions will be damaged beyond repair. Ever since the beginning of their history, the Chinese have emphasized the sanctity of the family bond. If they have survived so many disasters, it is largely because the institution of the family has endured, without fundamental change, from century to century. In a certain sense, all human responsibilities have been regarded as extensions or amplifications of family duties. As the *Book of Filial Duty* affirms, "The duty of children to their parents is the fountain whence all other duties spring and the starting-point of education". It was believed that no one could become a loyal subject of the Emperor, unless he had first learned the principles of loyalty in the home, in his daily intercourse with father and mother and brothers and sisters. Whenever the Empire sank into decadence, the root of the trouble was sought in some corruption of the tradition of filial piety. If that tradition could be revivified, the reform of the State was expected to follow as a

matter of course. The history of China confirms this judgment. Because the present upheaval in the Far East threatens the whole conception of family unity, one must admit the possibility that Chinese civilization is on the verge of death. Twenty-five hundred years ago, a similar danger threatened it. It was saved then by the great moral and spiritual movement which was inaugurated by Confucius. Will another Confucius come before it is too late? Does modern China deserve another Confucius?

In the Sixth Century B. C. the state of the Empire appeared desperate. The Chou Dynasty, founded six hundred years before by the sage Wên Wang, had lost dignity and authority. The nominal Emperor was defied by the great nobles who had practically transformed their feudal domains into independent states. The strong annexed and plundered the property of the weak, using the methods of open brigandage when craft and bribery failed. Moreover, the disloyalty of the nobles to their lord paramount had disrupted the feudal system in its entirety. No man could trust the members of his own household. Each little state was threatened from within by the conspiracies of ministers and soldiers, by ambitious vassals who awaited any opportunity or excuse to weaken the authority of the ruler, or to usurp his title. Meanwhile, the people were left without shepherds to restrain or to guide them. A complete and final moral collapse was imminent.

Confucius was born in 551 B. C. and died seventy-three years later. With the exception of a brief interval when he became the principal adviser of the Duke of his native state of Lu, he took no active part in the stormy political life of the time. For ten years he was an exile, wandering from one petty court to another, seeking some prince or minister who had the qualifications of the "Superior Man". There were moments of discouragement when he felt that he was wasting his time; that the only thing which the wisest man could do under such conditions was to do nothing. But the sufferings of China were his own, and he could not dismiss them from his consciousness. Gradually a group of disciples was formed, and these disciples were able to transmit to others his teaching and the memory of his example. The leaven began to work, with the sureness of all natural processes. Family life recovered its vigour, and, as if in response to this re-stirring of life, great men reappeared, and restored to the Chinese an awareness of national destiny. In 206 B. C. the Han Dynasty was established, and the great mediæval age of China began.

Thus was justified the prophecy of a government official recorded in the *Analects*.

> The prefect of the frontier in the town of I, asked to be introduced to Confucius, saying: I have never failed to obtain an audience of any sage who has visited these parts.—He was thereupon introduced by the Master's followers, and on coming out he said: My sons, why grieve at your Master's fall from power? The Empire has long been lying in evil ways, but now God is going to make Confucius his herald to rouse the land.

There are obvious correspondences between the China which Confucius knew and the China of to-day. Anarchy, disintegration and decay are essentially the

same everywhere and always. But for that very reason, we can discover instructive analogies between the moral desolation of the Sixth Century B. C. in China, and the general conditions of our own century, not only in China, but wherever there is supposed to be civilization, and particularly in Europe and America.

Confucius was confronted with the same basic problem which bewilders the modern reformer. There had been a rupture in the consciousness of his race, a loosening of the bonds which united the past with the present. In the literature of the late Chou period, there are curious traces of all sorts of subversive movements. Sophism was becoming fashionable. In other words, China was attacked by the disease of reckless thinking which has killed so many civilizations. Its traditions were questioned, its moral standards were ridiculed, its history was misrepresented. A vague Utopianism was in the air, disseminating the potent illusion that an ideal commonwealth can be created without reference to the inherited qualities of its citizens. China had a budding intelligentsia, which might have flowered into a brain-trust, with results which we dare not imagine. Confucianism saved it by a successful appeal to conscience and to commonsense. It is really worth our while to enquire into the nature of that appeal, for if the modern world can be preserved from ruin, it must be by the practical application of a conception of life based upon the same principles which Confucius taught and embodied. It should be remembered that Confucius referred to himself as a transmitter of immemorial truths. Students of Theosophy are justified in regarding him as an emissary of the Lodge of Masters which is the true source of the movement now represented in the world by The Theosophical Society.

Confucius has been greatly misunderstood, not only by Western scholars and missionaries, but by his own followers who have too often yielded to the congenital bias of Chinese scholars towards pedantry and literal-mindedness and self-satisfaction. He was not, as is so often supposed, a blind worshipper of past forms, an undiscriminating lover of ceremony, a restorer of ancestor-worship, for his devotion to the wisdom of the ancients was based upon years of study and meditation. He believed in the supreme value of experience. The Superior Man teaches what he has proved by his own immediate experience and has corroborated by the recorded experiences of others, both contemporary and ancient. We read in *The Doctrine of the Mean* (*Chung Yung*):

> However excellent a system of moral truths appealing to supernatural authority may be, it is not verifiable by experience; what is not verifiable by experience cannot command credence; and what cannot command credence the people will never obey. However excellent a system of moral truths appealing merely to worldly authority may be, it does not command respect; what does not command respect cannot command credence; and what cannot command credence the people will never obey. Therefore every system of moral laws must be based upon the man's own consciousness. It must be verified by the common experience of men. Examined into by comparing it with the teachings of acknowledged great and wise men of the past, there must be no divergence. Applying it to the operations and processes of Nature in the physical universe, there must be no contradiction. Confronted with the spiritual powers of the universe, a man must be

able to maintain it without any doubt. He must be prepared to wait a hundred generations after him for the coming of a man of perfect divine nature to confirm it without any misgiving. The fact that he is able to confront the spiritual powers of the universe without any doubt, shows that he understands the will of God. The fact that he is prepared to wait a hundred generations after him for the man of perfect divine nature without any misgiving, shows that he understands the nature of man.

This reverence for experience explains Confucius' intense interest in history. The life of a nation is subject to the same laws which govern the lives of individuals, and in history the elements of our common human nature appear in magnified and simplified form, clearly discernible. He was an indefatigable scholar, collecting and editing ancient chronicles and ballads which were finally shaped into the *Book of History*, the *Book of Odes*, and the *Book of Rites;* and composing a compendium of more recent events in the *Spring and Autumn Annals* of the State of Lu. Thus he made available the experience of antiquity for future generations. It is the fault of those future generations, if parts of "The Five Classics" have become meaningless and can no longer be fruitfully applied. In the *Book of Changes*, for example, a forgotten science of divination and numerology is preserved; but the key to its interpretation has been lost, and modern scholars ridicule it because it is beyond their comprehension.[1]

Confucius could justify his doctrines by an appeal to experience because the respect for experience was integrated in the Chinese consciousness. It is this respect which underlies and, in a measure, justifies what is called ancestor-worship. Ancestor-worship was an extension of the general tradition that the son owed devotion and obedience to his parents, that youth should humble itself before age. It signified loyalty to the truths which had been discovered and transmitted by past generations. One sacrificed to the ancestral spirits, because they represented the racial ideal which one sought to embody.

Therefore, when Confucius emphasized filial piety as the foundation of civilization, he was in reality resuscitating beliefs and practices which were inseparable from the essence of his racial consciousness. Indeed, they are inseparable from the essence of every racial consciousness. The standards of the Christian family differ only in form, not in substance, from the Confucian principles.

However, although Confucius was primarily a transmitter and a restorer of ancient truths, he was also a creative genius of the first order, one of the greatest of mankind. His message is individual and unique. He repeated what all the sages have said, but he cast his thought in a form which only he himself could have imagined. In particular, he enriched human consciousness by contributing his personal definition and interpretation of ideal human nature. This is found in his teaching concerning the Superior Man.

The Chinese term which we translate as the Superior Man is *chün tzŭ*. As

[1] "The Five Classics" and "The Four Books" constitute what might be called the sacred canon of Confucianism. "The Four Books" are the *Analects*, a collection of the sayings and discourses of Confucius and his chief disciples; the *Great Learning*, a brief ethical treatise, attributed to the disciple, Tsêng Ts'an; *The Doctrine of the Mean*, the authorship of which is ascribed to Confucius' grandson, although the internal evidence is that it contains the Master's teaching in its purest form; and the *Mencius*, which records the acts and teachings of the greatest of Confucian missionaries, who lived in the Fourth Century B. C., and was a contemporary of the Taoist mystic, Chuang-Tze.

Lionel Giles points out: " 'Princely man' is as nearly as possible the literal translation, and sometimes, . . . it actually means 'prince'." In certain connotations, it suggests the Greek *ho kalos kàgathos*, "the noble and good man", which is, perhaps, best rendered by the English "gentleman", in the highest and purest meaning of that term. But the *chün tzŭ* is also a sage. Students of Theosophy will recognize in many of his attributes the qualities of a chêla, of a disciple of a Master of Wisdom.

Confucius has left no distinct metaphysical system, no detailed cosmogony. Like the Buddha and like Socrates, he seems to have believed that the primary need of men was to understand themselves; that the study of cosmic Nature might become a dangerous distraction for the undisciplined mind. But there are passages which suggest that his general conception of Nature was similar to that of Lao-Tze and the Taoists. The following, from the *Chung Yung*, might be taken from a Taoist scripture:

> Absolute truth is indestructible. Being indestructible, it is eternal. Being eternal, it is self-existent. Being self-existent, it is infinite. Being infinite, it is vast and deep. Being vast and deep, it is transcendental and intelligent. It is because it is vast and deep that it contains all existence. It is because it is transcendental and intelligent that it embraces all existence. It is because it is infinite and eternal that it fills all existence. In vastness and depth it is like the Earth. In transcendental intelligence it is like Heaven. Infinite and eternal, it is Infinitude itself. Such being the nature of absolute truth, it manifests itself without being evident; it produces effects without action; it accomplishes its ends without being conscious [of limitations].
>
> The principle in the course and operation of Nature may be summed up in one word: it exists for its own sake without any double or ulterior motive. Hence the way in which it produces things is unfathomable. Nature is vast, deep, high, intelligent, infinite, and eternal. The heaven, appearing before us, is only this bright, shining spot; but when taken in its immeasurable extent, the sun, moon, stars, and constellations are suspended in it, and all things are embraced under it. The earth, appearing before us, is but a handful of soil; but taken in all its breadth and depth, it sustains mighty Himalayas without feeling their weight.

The adoration of "Absolute Nature" is as typically Chinese as the cult of filial duty. It is, indeed, the mainspring of Far Eastern art and poetry, and a recurring theme of its mystical literature. Above and within the physical and visible world, Chinese tradition recognized another world, the source from which all existences come forth and to which they return. In the profoundest sense, however, as the philosophers taught, there is only one world, only one path of being, the Tao, nor do existences come forth and return from the Real. They only seem to do so; in truth, they cannot depart from that which is their essence, their *raison d'être*. Thus, wherever there is being, the Tao can be found, if we search deeply enough.

"The principle in the course and operation of Nature" is, in its supreme aspect, known as "Heaven" or "God". It is the Divine Law and not a personal divinity. But it is, in another sense, the very substance of all real personality in the universe. Human nature, in its highest phase, may thus be called a personification of God. In the *Analects*, it is said that "the Master would never talk about prodi-

gies, feats of strength, crime, or supernatural beings." He could discover no place in the cosmos for the supernatural. The course and operation of Nature must at the last bring all creatures to their proper rest. It is necessary to add, however, that the term, Nature, as here used, has a significance far transcending that which is given it by most Western thinkers, for whom it means little more than the sum-total of physical processes. "Absolute Nature", like the *natura naturans* of Spinoza, is the one creative force which is at work in all worlds and on all planes.

Although he seldom refers to it directly, we may presume, on the basis of the passage quoted above, that such a metaphysical background was always present in his thought. It makes intelligible two ideas which Confucius was always stressing,—that the Superior Man is the Natural Man, and that moral or spiritual progress is a natural process, obeying laws essentially identical with those which preside over all cyclic changes and the growth of all living things.

The Superior Man is the Natural Man. Certainly this is a dangerous statement, open to the gravest misinterpretations. The "natural man", as Occidental thought habitually conceives him, is not "superior", in any sense of the word. He is an animal whose impulse to happiness is thwarted by a system of taboos originally imposed by the conditions of primitive society, and morality or ethics is the survival of this system into an age in which taboos are no longer needed; or he is the "noble savage" of Rousseau and Chateaubriand, a normally sweet-tempered creature, whose native goodness has been smothered by civilization and particularly by the division of society into castes. In any event, the modernistic moralist proposes to substitute a new morality for the old, pretending that this substitution will make it possible for all "natural men" to enjoy themselves, freed from all ancient inhibitions and all class distinctions.

Confucius had no such illusions. He regarded the Superior Man as "natural" because the form of the Superior Man has been pre-determined for human nature by "the ordinance of God". It is normal for humanity to grow into that higher form, as it is normal for the life-principle in the acorn to expand into the form of an oak.

> The ordinance of God is what we call the law of our being. To fulfil the law of our being is what we call the moral law. The moral law when reduced to a system is what we call religion. . . . The life of the moral man is an exemplification of the universal order. The life of the vulgar person, on the other hand, is a contradiction of the universal order. . . . When the passions, such as joy, anger, grief and pleasure, have not awakened, that is our true self, or moral being. When these passions awaken and each and all attain due measure and degree, that is the moral order. Our true self or moral being is the great root of existence, and moral order is the universal law in the world. When true moral being and moral order are realized, the universe then becomes a cosmos and all things attain their full growth and development (*Chung Yung*).

Thus ethics is as truly a branch of natural science as botany or astronomy When truly seen, the universe appears as a moral order. The laws of physics and the laws of the spiritual life correspond to one another, as Drummond perceived, since they are ordinances of the same Divinity, expressions of a

Nature which is indivisible. But if the Superior Man be the Natural Man, why are so few men natural? Why is the average human creature a "vulgar person" whose life is "a contradiction of the universal order"?

Confucius was much too wise to attempt to explain the incidence of evil and folly, ignorance and illusion, in the natural order. He suggests, however, that one source of these things is found in the human mind, in the misuse of imagination, desire and will. "There is nothing more evident than that which cannot be seen by the eyes and nothing more palpable than that which cannot be perceived by the senses: wherefore the moral man watches diligently over his secret thoughts" (*Chung Yung*). Men are moved by the thoughts and delusions to which they heedlessly give themselves. They do not really take the time and trouble to meditate before they act, to determine for themselves what it is that they really desire. What is needed, therefore, is self-knowledge, which is acquired by meditation upon experience. One must search, within the heart, in social life, in history, in the physical universe; one must resolve to find, anywhere and everywhere, evidences of the universal order, the moral law.

The ancients who wished to illustrate illustrious virtue throughout the kingdom, first ordered well their own states. Wishing to order well their own states, they first regulated their families. Wishing to regulate their families, they first cultivated their persons. Wishing to cultivate their persons, they first rectified their hearts. Wishing to rectify their hearts, they first sought to be sincere in their thoughts. Wishing to be sincere in their thoughts, they first extended to the utmost their knowledge. Such extension of their knowledge lay in the investigation of things (*The Great Learning*).

Confucius, like Plato, believed that knowledge and love are in essence one and the same; that, for the mature human being, love without knowledge and knowledge without love are equally unnatural. Man must, by the constraint of his nature, love truth and nobility, when these are really perceived. Because so few perceive things as they are, human life is troubled and futile, the affections are turned towards irrational and base objects, and the mind dissipates its energies in fantasy and ratiocination without purpose.

There are men, I daresay, who act rightly without knowing the reason why, but I am not one of them. Having heard much, I sift out the good and practise it; having seen much, I retain it in my memory. This is the second order of wisdom (*Analects*).

These words are of particular interest because they imply that Confucius recognized the superiority of intuitive understanding to the knowledge which is laboriously built up by the human reason. As Giles suggests, "the saying has a distinctly Taoist flavour". The major distinction between Confucius and Lao-Tze is that the former founded his teaching upon common experience and reason, whereas the latter insisted that truth can only be known finally by immediate intuition, by direct spiritual vision. According to a Taoist tradition, Confucius visited the older sage and paid homage to him, saying afterwards to his disciples: "There is the dragon [a symbol of Adeptship]: I cannot tell how he mounts on the wind through the clouds and rises to heaven. To-day I have seen Lao-Tze,

and can only compare him to the dragon." Chuang-Tze, who respected Confucius in spite of his loathing for certain Confucianist sectarians, suggested that he preferred the way of Lao-Tze, but was forced by destiny to teach a lower way to mankind. However that may be, the way of common experience and reason which Confucius taught is better adapted than the mystical Tao for the vast majority of men. When the unregenerate rely on spiritual intuition as their guide, they soon lose themselves in the labyrinth of the psychic world. It is too easy to mistake glamour for light. The sublime visions of a Lao-Tze are reserved for those who have perfected themselves in the "lower way" of self-discipline which Confucius pointed out.

Tzŭ Kung asked: What would you say of the man who conferred benefits far and wide on the people and was able to be the salvation of all? Would you pronounce him a man of moral virtue?—Of moral virtue? said the Master. Nay, rather, of divine virtue. Even the Emperors of the Golden Age were still striving to attain this height (*Analects*).

The Superior Man stands at the beginning of the path, not at its end,—if we must think of it as having an end. But as the sage so clearly saw, before one can become divine, one must become human. The summit of the mountain is reached by those who begin its ascent, not by those who fancy that one can dispense with the intermediate stages of the climb and can somehow leap immediately to the ultimate goal.

I know now why there is no real moral life. The wise mistake moral law for something higher than it really is; and the foolish do not know enough what moral law really is. I know now why the moral law is not understood. The noble natures want to live too high, high above their moral ordinary self; and ignoble natures do not live high enough (*Chung Yung*).

Therefore, the *first* stage of the path, as Confucius conceived it, is to become, not divine, but truly human. He called upon his disciples to become aware of the powers which they actually possessed, to rescue them from misuse, to redivert them to the purposes for which Nature intended them.

Yen Yuan inquired as to the meaning of true goodness. The Master said: The subdual of self and the reversion to the natural laws governing conduct—this is true goodness. If a man can for the space of one day subdue his selfishness and revert to natural laws, the whole world will call him good. True goodness springs from a man's own heart. How can it depend on other men?—Yen Yuan said: Kindly tell me the practical rule to be deduced from this.—The Master replied: Do not use your eyes, your ears, your power of speaking or your faculty of movement without obeying the inner law of self-control (*Analects*).

The word which Giles translates as "the inner law of self-control" is *li*. It is the term rendered by Legge as "propriety", which, as Giles says, "suggests nothing so much as the headmistress of a young ladies' seminary". *Li* often denoted religious rites or, indeed, any form of ceremonial or etiquette. However, it also signified the inward conscious state, of which ritual, ceremony and

politeness were the natural expressions; and this seems to be the sense in which it was generally used by Confucius. It is associated with the term, *jen*, often translated as "virtue", but suggesting less the outer form than the inner intent, the kindliness or charity which becomes manifest through right action.

When *li* and *jen* become active, the whole life of the human being becomes dynamic and creative in ways which the ordinary man cannot conceive. The least act is then charged with significance, inasmuch as it is the vehicle of a defined, conscious purpose. When man no longer acts against Nature but with her, he becomes the channel of forces infinitely greater than himself. He lives creatively, even though he may be unaware of his powers. Confucius, like the Taoists, did not believe that man discovers new forms and values by straining to invent them. Few of his followers have understood that Confucius was a great moralist because they have failed to understand that he was fundamentally mystical in his attitude towards all problems. "There is nothing more evident than that which cannot be seen by the eyes." As the disciple turns his attention to his "secret thoughts" and purifies these, "the principle in the course and operation of Nature" transforms him and speaks through him to mankind.

The man of moral virtue, wishing to stand firm himself, will lend firmness to others; wishing to be illumined, he will illumine others. . . . Some one addressing Confucius, said: Why, Sir, do you take no part in the government?—The Master replied: What does the *Book of History* say concerning filial piety? Do your duty as a son and as a brother, and these qualities will make themselves felt in the government. This, then, really amounts to taking part in the government. Holding office need not be considered essential. . . . A ruler questioned Confucius on a point of government, saying: Ought I not to cut off the lawless in order to establish law and order?—Confucius replied: Sir, what need is there for the death penalty in your system of government? If you showed a sincere desire to be good, your people would likewise be good. The virtue of the prince is like unto wind; that of the people like unto grass. For it is the nature of grass to bend when the wind blows upon it (*Analects*).

God in giving life to all created things is surely bountiful to them according to their qualities. Hence the tree that is full of life He fosters and sustains, while that which is ready to fall He cuts off and destroys (*Chung Yung*).

Confucius illustrated this doctrine by his life. He was, indeed, like a tree full of life. It is not strange that a commentator compared him to the Principle which orders the phenomena of Nature, for Confucius had raised a new order out of the confusion of his age. Tzŭ-ssŭ said:

Confucius possessed, as if by hereditary transmission, the virtues of the Emperors Yao and Shun. . . . Above all, he kept in unison with the seasons of the sky; below, he conformed to the water and the land. We may liken him unto the sky and earth, . . . in respect of the universality with which they overspread and enfold things. We may liken him unto the four seasons in respect of their varied march; unto the sun and moon, in respect of their alternate shining. All things are kept in train without injuring one another; their ways go on together without interference: the smaller forces in river streams, the greater forces in ample transformations. It is this that makes the earth and sky so great.

Stanley V. LaDow.

(*To be continued*)

THE OAK AND THE NUTHATCH

IF you would learn how the great world wags to-day, come to my window, high above a busy thoroughfare, and armed with an opera-glass you will acquire a liberal education. The other day we were privileged to watch a large and popular church disporting itself in modern fashion. A fuss was going on round the great open doors. Adults of both sexes were rushing up and down through hordes of milling children of every racial shade. There were two bands, movingly juvenile, standing too close together to be playing different tunes simultaneously, and too close to everyone else to be playing in the key. When Robert Louis Stevenson travelled steerage, bets were taken as to which was tea and which was coffee, a faint flavour of dish-towel in the tea, but lacking in the coffee, deciding the question. Even so did "America" on the right and "Yankee Doodle" on the left promote active betting, but with no result, there being a flavour of dish-towel in both. Ambling through the crowd were several minor clergy (at least I hope they were minor) cassocked and bareheaded. Each bore across his manly chest a placard with the proud device, "I will not fight", and with instant intelligence we said to each other "Pacifists"! The infants carried banners, obviously home-made and nailed to sticks of kindling wood (the pageant regarded *as* pageant was decidedly scrubby). The banners remarked on one side that "war was hell", and on the reverse, "to hell with war". It was provocative of thought to watch six-year-olds staggering under them. The curates milled about, and the distracted ladies rushed up and down, and a large number of pink balloons were borne aloft. We squabbled over the significance of these, but finally agreed that, obeying the law of correspondences, they were worn above the shoulders to typify the head.

But even fashionable churches cannot arrest the cycles. Suddenly—just like that!—war broke out! A very small girl, no bigger than Belgium, was pushed into the gutter by a rude and determined boy, who, wishing to be somewhere else, walked straight through her. This was resented by her several brothers and the sidewalks were instantly mobilized. Belgium wept in the gutter minus a hair-ribbon, while attackers and defenders, making fists the size of mandarin oranges, opened hostilities. To the credit of the curates and the ladies, be it said that a League of Nations was formed in the twinkling of an eye, and it was true to type, for they talked and they talked and they talked, and then, without question of right or wrong, made that most disgustful of all proposals to children who need justice—that they "kiss and make up". It is agreeable to add that both curates and ladies were noticeably knocked about before peace without honour descended, when they all scuffled away out of step and out of tune, a Lilliputian army "terrible with banners", conscripted for the Black Lodge.

The peace that ensued for the onlookers was disturbed and dark with questionings. Have we in training a generation of little poltroons who, like the pusil-

lanimous hero of a popular play of old, threaten in the face of dire wrong to "slap the wrist"? Why enrol infants for this type of pernicious nonsense? What dreams are carried in those pink balloons? What skandhas are being planted and watered before our eyes?

Skandhas! It is disconcerting when a vast subject strolls nonchalantly across the threshold of a little paper, and demands to be included. Theosophy leads us to the edge of many mysteries, that of the skandhas not the least, and over them we muse and wonder. But bewilderment is a poor foundation on which to build, and only in the sure hope of correction by my betters could I venture to meet this challenge.

May it be said that we are factories, working day in and day out, lifetime after lifetime—factories that we cannot shut down if we would, the freedom of our will being limited to the quality of our production, these products being attributes,—skandhas? Or are we laboratories working under pressure to perfect chemical results, which results will be attributes,—skandhas? Or gardens through which the seasons inexorably pass, where we sow and reap perforce, and where not only will the sesame be sesame and the corn be corn, but thistles will be thistles and tares be tares; but wheat or weeds, the harvest is sure and will be attributes—skandhas?

If it be so, a consideration of the skandhas will throw light on many a household saying and fairy tale, on many a myth and legend. We say of one, "he was born with a silver spoon in his mouth"; of another, "he has no luck", or "the gods must have a spite against him", but there are no silver spoons, no luck, no spite—only skandhas. The ancients had largely outgrown this simplicity. Their Fates and Nemeses, at least for the instructed among them, had meanings that the "man in the street" must always miss, and there is a man in the street in the blood of all of us. Dreaming false, he persuades himself that the mission of the Fates is to confer or to withhold, to bless or to curse, but it is not so. Watching the fulfilment of the Law, doubtless they suffer or are glad when we shoulder again those burdens we must drop between the worlds—burdens that are at once our endowment and our doom; perhaps they weariedly sigh like poor Mary Queen of Scots, "their end is their beginning", but they too are under the Law of Necessity. Clotho may spin the thread, Lachesis mark its limit, and Atropos sever it, but they deal only with what we bring them, attributes—skandhas. Destiny, far from being blind, has three eyes.

When the Daughters of Time turn from us and "under their solemn fillets we see the scorn", we have but ourselves to blame. "It all lies before you, take what you will", easy tinsel or hard-won gold—"bread, kingdoms, stars, and sky that holds them all". The choice was made for us with splendid precision long ago, after forty days and forty nights in the wilderness, and that is where it must always be made—in that place, with that companionship, by that help.

It is said that "everything can be reduced to states of consciousness". Then are the skandhas of the very stuff and essence of consciousness? The *Glossary* tells us that we are working with five skandhas now and that there are two more to come. The first and simplest is "rupa", form, vehicle. If that covers

all form in which human consciousness has embodied itself, it must mean houses and clothes and furniture and many other things besides the physical body, and one can only suppose that an immense amount of experimentation is going on in every direction,—most of it for the discard, we hope and pray. Our patterns in the noumenal world are of a divine perfection but, like small children with paint boxes, we copy badly. We fashion rupas of cheap material and of evil colour, rupas that never fit and that wear shabby too soon, and we wail that it is not fair; but *we* did the fashioning. Passing on to the next, if "perception" were not blunt, weak, untrained; if "consciousness" (that astounding complex) were not for ever busy on wrong planes, arrogant, lazy, and fed with husks; if "action" were not misdirected, violent or half-hearted; if "knowledge", in the sense of *nous*, were not skilfully evaded, then we could take heart, for we should be approaching the gift of the sixth. But while man still vaunts such changelings as vanity for pride, and prejudice for faith, Divine mercy withholds the sixth. We should only debase intuition if we had it, and, by its lunatic shadow, the masquerading "hunch", continue to make havoc.

We hear a great deal to-day about "stream of consciousness" literature. A great master of literature is welcome to his methods, and there are streams of consciousness into which it is a privilege to be pitched. Unfortunately the popular way seems to be to take the nastiest or the stupidest type of mind and write page after page of its supposed drivel, without paragraph, humour or let-up. It makes boresome reading, its appeal being only to the callow who have not discovered how nasty and stupid the human mind can be. Casual acquaintances will furnish it free of charge, and you wouldn't read it out loud to your puppy.

But these people are not barking up the wrong tree, they are only barking on the wrong note, for they have a "hunch" about consciousness, a suspicion as to its importance. It is true that the "stream of consciousness" is our great open secret, our key to all planes, and the Masters have said so in every form of words. To change its direction is to be born again, to clarify it is to work with the Logos. "As a man thinketh in his heart." Then how shall we think in the heart? "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are pure, lovely and of good report—think on *these* things." Many saints have left their records for our help. Most of these lacked the training of the Secret Wisdom and therefore float better than they swim, but they float in an ocean of love, and great is our debt to them.

Love and Wisdom need each other for this travel. When that union is accomplished the cosmic ocean will be full of brave swimmers instead of lone figures here and there. We see them passing—swift, unresting, rapt, "with intensest love moving perpetually toward things divine". They pause beside us where we splash and flounder, and call us fellow-swimmers. Perhaps we are, perhaps some day we shall master that superb over-stroke and keep pace with them. Indeed, as we watch their lovely progress are we not "almost persuaded"?

L.S.

HISTORICAL MYSTERIES

THE story of Martin, the peasant seer, has often been told. French Memoirs of the early nineteenth century contain numerous references to him, while the essential facts of his connection with Louis XVIII are matters of official record. Perhaps the most dependable account of his experience and "mission" is given by G. LeNotre in his *Martin le Visionnaire—1816-1834*, in which all the official references and numerous depositions are set forth. The story, as we now give it, is as well authenticated as any event in history.

* * * * * * *

This happened on January 15th, 1816.

Thomas Martin, a French peasant, was at work alone in his fields.

"Martin", said a voice, close by, "you must go to the King, to warn him that he is in danger. Wicked men seek to overthrow the Government. He must bring about order in his domain, and decree public prayers for the conversion of the people . . . otherwise the direst misfortunes will befall France."

The farmer, startled by the unperceived approach, and loathe to have his work interrupted, answered testily,

"Since you know so much about it, why not carry out your commission yourself! Why choose a poor man like me—I am no talker."

"It is not I who am to go, but you", replied the other, quietly but peremptorily, "do as I command you". And Martin, stupefied, saw the man rise into the air, waver an instant, then slowly vanish "as though he had dissolved".

The peasant's first impulse was to run, but as if compelled by a will higher than his own, he took up his fork and continued his work. The fact that it was completed in about half the usual time, added no little to the uneasy preoccupation with which he turned homeward.

Three days later, January 18th, 1816, he went to his cellar, candle in hand, and was selecting some fine red apples, when beside him, without warning, again stood the stranger. What might have been said on this occasion was never recorded, for the farmer bounded up the stairs three steps at a time, the candle falling unheeded to the floor. Two days later still, when measuring oats for the horses, he found himself face to face with the unknown, standing framed in the stable doorway. Again he fled in consternation, bolting himself into his house. He could not refrain from telling his wife and his brother-in-law of the disturbing experiences, but they merely scoffed—as though anyone could be hidden in their small home, with three active grown-ups, rising early and working late, and with several children about!

The next day, Sunday, all the family went to the village church. Martin, extending his hand toward the holy water, suddenly realized that his "unknown" was beside him, performing the same rite. As he walked up the aisle, this seemingly solid individual followed, but stopped at the entrance to the

pew; remaining there, he entered most devoutly into all that was done, joined the family as they met on the steps of the church afterward, and proceeded with them along the road to the farm. His appearance was the same on each occasion—of medium height, slender in build, with a thin, fine face and gentle though compelling voice; he was always clothed in a long, tight-fitting great-coat, buttoned from top to toe, and wore a round, tall hat. As they reached the farm, he suddenly faced Martin, said imperatively, "Carry out your commission—do as I tell you!", and vanished. At last there were witnesses! His family were with him; they must have seen and heard all. But no—they had seen nothing, heard nothing.

In bewilderment, Martin turned to his Parish priest. The latter knew him to be steady, industrious, thrifty, a good father, not given to drink, never engaging in political agitation, never subject to religious unbalance or extremes. Concealing his astonishment, the Curé told him such things happen now and then to the bravest and best; advised him to see his doctor and adopt a simple régime, and promised to say a Mass, with the intention that light be vouchsafed as to the reality of the apparitions. Martin attended the Mass. On his return home, the stranger appeared for the fifth time, merely saying, "Martin, carry out your commission. Time is passing."

The Curé straightway appealed to his superior, the Bishop of Versailles, a man of wide experience in public life, kindly, tolerant, but by no means credulous. The Bishop talked with the farmer, pronounced his trouble ridiculous,—dreams and nothing more; then bethought him that, as the instructions involved the King, it was really outside his own jurisdiction anyway. Martin should go to the Prefect at Chartres and tell him the story. "And", he added, "if you see your unknown, ask him his name and who told him to come to you—then tell your Curé, who will report it to me." While he had no faith in celestial visitants, the Bishop was impressed by Martin's absolute sincerity and good faith, and, concluding that he was the dupe of some enemy of the Government, wrote to the Minister of Police.

The day after Martin's return to his little village of Gallardon, the visitor appeared again. "I was with you, though invisible", he said, "when you talked with the Bishop. He told you to ask me my name and on whose behalf I come. My name will remain unknown. He who sent me is above me." Martin, although cold with fear, ventured to ask why such a commission was given to a mere peasant, and was told that it was in order to humble pride,—though not his pride. Three days later, again appearing, the stranger said:

"Martin, you will be led before the King, you will disclose to him secrets of the time of his exile, the knowledge of which will be given you only at the moment when you are introduced into his presence."

This and subsequent conversations, some of them dealing with facts of which Martin knew nothing, or employing words unfamiliar to him and remembered imperfectly, were written down by the Curé and reported to the Bishop, who finally recommended that the Minister of Police send someone to arrest the intruder and put an end to the matter. Martin and the Curé were both sum-

moned before the Prefect of the district, where the peasant maintained his straightforward simplicity and composure throughout a rigorous examination. At the end of it, he was sent off to Paris, in the custody of a police officer, to appear before the Minister of Police, with the recommendation that severity be exercised.

It was on a Friday morning, March 8th, that the countryman and his gendarme were interviewed at the Hôtel du Quai Malaquais. Stepping into an impressive antechamber, the first person Martin perceived was his "unknown", who told him to be steady, to have no uneasiness or fear, and to tell his story just as it had occurred. Then he vanished, the inner doors opened, and Martin was led before the Minister.

The Minister of Police at that time was the Comte Elie Decazes. Having won the confidence of the King to a marked degree, he had aroused jealousy in every party at court. Decazes received Martin haughtily, and having heard his story, told him he could return to his home, easy in mind, for the enigmatic personage had been arrested and was now in prison.

Martin, whom no cross-examining disturbed, since each step brought him that much nearer his goal and to final release from the apparitions, replied simply, "I don't believe that. I saw him here just now, and then he vanished". The Minister called one of his secretaries, and commanded,

"See if that man is really in prison."

"He is", replied the subordinate.

"Well", said Martin, "since you have him, let him be brought here. I shall recognize him at once."

Decazes abruptly ended the interview, sending the prisoner back to his hotel —the Hôtel de Calais, 138, rue Montmartre—in charge of his gendarme, who was ordered not to leave him day or night. That afternoon, another visitation.

"They told you", said the stranger, "that I had been arrested. Inform him who said so, that he has no power over me!"

At seven the following morning, he came again, this time to say that a physician would come, whose questions must be answered quite frankly and without uneasiness. On neither occasion could the police officer, André, perceive anything. About three o'clock a visitor arrived, and Martin received him with, "You must be the doctor whose visit was announced to me."

"How do you know that?" countered the other, laughing.

"I know it because the unknown personage whom I see, warned me of it."

It was Pinel, famous alienist and head physician at the Salpêtrière, sent by Decazes. Again Martin told his story, relating it with his usual quiet sincerity. Pinel reported afterward that there was no trace of delirium, but that Martin's mental state, attributing real existence to purely fantastic images, was not unusual. Inasmuch, however, as it could conceivably change to a condition dangerous to others, he advised for him the medical treatment for the mentally deranged. Later, reflecting on Martin's good sense in all but the matter of his visions, Pinel became disturbed, doubtful of his diagnosis, and offered to make another examination in company with M. Royer-Collard, head physician at

Charenton, the State institution for the insane—finally recommending that Martin be sent there for several weeks' observation.

André and his prisoner were summoned in haste to the Ministry, where the gendarme was admitted and ordered to take Martin, waiting outside, to Charenton forthwith. The two had become fast friends. André was accustomed to the custody of criminals. But this peasant was so honest, so dependable, so level-headed on all but the one subject, that it was impossible not to sympathize with his desire to rid himself of his obsessions and get back to his family and neglected fields. With the idea of breaking the distressing news gently, he remarked:

"You think perhaps, my friend, that we are about to return home?"

"Not a bit of it", replied Martin. "I know very well where you are going to take me. You are taking me to Charenton—but no matter, no harm will come of it." His "vision", he explained, had told him, and this time had lifted the incognito, saying:

"The incredulity is so great that I must disclose my name—I am the Archangel Raphael, high in the sight of God." (Various other instances will at once occur to the reader where names of this kind have been used by messengers of the Lodge, according to the comprehension and need of the individual they are addressing.) Before disappearing this time, the visitant foretold that an inquiry would be made at Gallardon, by the authorities, as to the people with whom Martin had associated. Martin wrote at once, on March 12th, to his brother, telling him that this would be done. It was not until the 16th that the official order was given for the investigation to be made.

Left at Charenton with his few belongings, Martin went through more examinations, more questioning. His answers, as always, were clear, precise, satisfactory. His physical condition, it was found, could scarcely have been better. Asked why he had been sent there, he related quietly the entire account of his visions, all of which was written down in the record forming the basis of the present recital. The case was pronounced a "partial and ecstatic mania", appearing intermittently, and in the intervals leaving the intellectual faculties entirely sound. But Royer-Collard who made the diagnosis, was uneasy. Too many of the usual "symptoms" were lacking. Martin was given the freedom of the grounds, though very closely watched, and was allowed to help with the gardening. Except during his examinations, he refrained from talking of his apparitions. His simple faith made it possible for him to accept the entire situation without any particular wonderment. He was convinced that each step in his experience was the will of God, and his acceptance and conviction were so complete that they affected to a greater or less degree everyone with whom he associated. Added to that, he never showed impatience, sadness, fear, nor excessive gaiety. He entered whole-heartedly and equably into the life about him, all of which he found novel and pleasurable.

The day after his first examination, the "angel" appeared again, in unconcealed displeasure. "Since they are behaving like this, I will no longer come", he said. "It is not doctors of medicine but doctors of theology that should be

consulted! If they continue in their incredulity, misfortune will certainly follow. As for you, hold fast to your trust in God. No harm will come to you."

About eleven days later, however, he did appear again. Martin was just starting a letter to his brother, and, as the vision ended, wrote: "As I was about to write you, the same apparition came to me, saying:—'I told you that I would no longer come; I assure you that I should be deeply sorry if my efforts were to fail; I assure you that the most terrible scourge is about to fall upon France.' The archangel told me also that I could not wish better health than I have, that the most learned doctors are sent to visit me, and that they are unable to find a thing wrong with me, and that if I am kept here it is because they want to put me to the test." In concluding, the angel had said, "Martin, I give you peace; be not troubled; have no disquietude", and Martin, who told the doctor everything, added that although he had always been very tranquil, he felt, from that moment, a calm and peace which he had never experienced before.

Still another and another visitation. Every afternoon, Martin walked in the park. Suddenly one day, the "angel" appeared, saying:

"There is division of opinion and discussion regarding me. Some say that I am an imaginary being, or even an angel of darkness. To convince you that I am real, come to me and take me by the hand." Martin obeyed and "felt his own hand gripped as by two ordinary hands". Thereupon the angel threw open the overcoat that had invariably enveloped him, and there shone a light of such blinding radiance that Martin could discern nothing of the body. The "angel" then wrapped the coat about him again, and the light disappeared. Next he removed his tall hat, saying,

"A fallen angel wears on his brow the mark of his reprobation: examine mine and see if you find anything of the sort." Martin raised his eyes to a forehead of spotless purity. Without another word, the visitor was gone.

This account was given, be it remembered, over the signature of Pinel, physician-in-chief of the Salpêtrière, and Royer-Collard, physician-in-chief at Charenton, who declared that Martin showed no sign of aberration, that he was not an impostor, that the desire to be in the limelight had never entered his "rather ordinary and limited" mind, and finally that it was physically impossible, in this disconcerting phenomenon, for any outside human agency to have intervened.

There is nothing in the record to indicate the cause of the next step. Decazes, contrary to what might have been expected, had followed the case rather closely, demanding reports. The Curé of Gallardon, by now convinced that the phenomena were miraculous, and that his parishioner was the chosen of heaven for the salvation of France, was unceasing in his efforts, demanding first that something be done for Martin's family and neglected farm, and actually obtaining from the King, through Decazes, a gift of money for this purpose. Not satisfied with anything short of Martin's release, however, the Curé finally wrote to Monseigneur de Talleyrand de Périgord, Archbishop of Rheims and Grand Almoner to the King. The latter sent two eminent ecclesiastics to Charenton, who put Martin through still another examination. The story

had by this time become widely known, and must almost certainly have come to the ears of the King through one channel or another. The King is represented as being impervious to such an idea as that of angelic messengers, but as being possibly suspicious that enemies of his favourite, Decazes, were responsible for the whole affair, and curious to see how far they could and would go.

Whatever the explanation, a messenger from the Minister of Police arrived suddenly at Charenton on the second of April, with orders for Martin's removal, no reason and no subsequent destination being specified. He was taken at once before Decazes, who questioned him, asking, for one thing, what he intended to say to the King.

"I do not know at present", replied Martin simply, "it will be told to me when I am in his presence."

"Well, since you wish to go to him", said the Minister, "I am going to take you there." And he withdrew to don his court attire. Immediately, the "archangel" appeared, though only for a moment.

"Martin", said he, "you are going to speak to the King. You will be alone with him. Have no fear. The words you are to speak will come to you."

The coach bearing the Minister departed first, followed, after a brief interval, by another in which rode Martin and a subordinate of the Ministry, instructed to take his charge to the first valet-de-chambre of the King. In the unaccustomed grandeur of the Tuileries, Martin maintained his usual composure. Taken before the King, and by the latter's order left alone with him, he returned the kindly greeting of the monarch courteously but unceremoniously, and, when told to be seated, took a chair at the opposite side of a little table at which the King sat. Here, after repeating once more the oft-told story of his apparitions, he disclosed several secret incidents which had occurred during the King's exile, part of them forgotten by the King himself after twenty years. He then revealed certain plots, and without mentioning the names of the leaders, designated them unmistakably. Then the King, greatly moved, raised his eyes and his hands toward heaven and said, "Martin, these matters must be known only to you and to me". And Martin promised the most absolute secrecy.

The peasant stated afterward that during the interview, which lasted about a half hour, he spoke with extreme ease: it seemed almost as though another spoke through him, the words came to his tongue so readily; and the secrets which he revealed to the King were totally unknown to him, until he became conscious of them as he entered the royal presence. Once they were told, his ease of speech suddenly left him. "Sire", he said, "my mission is accomplished. I have nothing more to say." He was then sent back to Charenton, where he gave the authorities his account of the royal audience, though without revealing its "secrets". After this, Martin was set free, and returned home.

The "archangel" had promised that once the message was given to the King, he would never appear again. The promise was kept,—as Martin himself declared. Martin's later career, however, is puzzling. Practically none of those who talked with him up to this point, doubted his absolute sincerity, veracity and good faith, no matter what explanation they may have given of his visions.

The same cannot be said of him in after years when, famous throughout France, and exposed to the foolish adulation of countless wonder-mongers and sentimentalists, he began to see other visions, to hear another "voice", and to utter prophecies. So long as Louis XVIII lived, Martin observed the silence he had pledged. This did not prevent others, however, from imagining just what "must have been" said; and rumour was rife. Enemies of Decazes were sure that the famous interview must have been for the purpose of warning the King against his minister's machinations. Supporters of various pretenders to the throne, saw in it an order to the King to abdicate in favour of their particular claimant. Any calamity that occurred was regarded as the punishment meted out for failure to obey the command of heaven. By 1824, when Louis XVIII died, Martin's mode of life, his personality, his whole outlook, appear to have changed, as a result of the notoriety he had experienced, and, upon the death of the King, he was persuaded that his promise of silence was no longer binding. He then declared that during his conversation with Louis, the King had been reminded of a day, early in the reign of Louis XVI, and before the latter had any children, when the two brothers were hunting together. Into the mind of Louis XVIII (at that time the Comte de Provence) had come the guilty thought that if the King were struck by a stray bullet, the crown of France would be his own. As for the primary message of the "angel", it was asserted to be that Louis XVIII, finally on the throne after so many years of waiting, was nevertheless not rightfully there, for his nephew, the little Dauphin, supposed to have died in prison in 1795, had in reality escaped from the Temple, was still alive, and that France would know happiness only when she had discovered and enthroned him. On another occasion, Martin claimed to have told the King that he must not be crowned; and the King never was crowned. Incidentally there is some indication that Charles X too, was influenced in his abdication by statements of Martin regarding the legitimate claimant.

The complicating element in these assertions is, that belief in the escape and continued existence of the little Dauphin was widely held, and that Martin had become associated with a group of ardent enthusiasts on the subject. Numerous pretenders had appeared (some twenty-five or thirty in all), desirous of claiming the royal heritage. One of the best known of these, "Karl-Wilhelm Naundorff", Martin met and claimed to recognize as the true Dauphin whom he had seen in a vision. And such was Martin's standing as a seer and prophet, that his declaration gave, in effect, a supernatural backing to Naundorff's claims which had surprising weight. Rumour and fact became so entangled that it is difficult to judge whether Martin's sincerity and good faith had remained with him—but it is equally difficult to pronounce against him. It was a time when political feeling ran high, and political enmities were intense, and Martin, after receiving repeated warnings (anonymous, though entirely of earth this time) to desist from his activities on behalf of his "Dauphin", died by the hand of an assassin, in 1834.

X.

"NATIONS CAN LIVE AT HOME"

"IN the July, 1933, issue of the QUARTERLY, in the 'Screen of Time', it was suggested that England would be very much better off to-day if, after the Armistice of November, 1918, her demobilized armies had been helped to occupy the many acres of uncultivated land in England and Scotland. The idea was that it is the first duty of every government to try to make a country self-supporting in the event of war. England was nearly starved to death by German submarines, and ought not to allow such a condition to remain possible. In other words, England (and of course every other country similarly) ought to do its utmost to raise within its own borders enough food to feed its entire population. It would have been claimed until recently that, owing to the poverty of the soil, etc., such large-scale production of food would have been impossible in a densely populated country. I am now sending you a book[1] which meets that objection head-on. Are the author's conclusions correct or are they fallacious? Have they been put to a practical test, or are they merely theoretical possibilities?"

Such is the opening paragraph of a recent letter which introduced us to this book upon which we have been asked to give an opinion. Now the present writer is not an agronomist, so he handed the book to a friend who follows that particular profession. Thus the following is an amalgam of three points of view: that of our Recorder of the "Screen", who is alive to the social danger of the present hand-to-mouth economic policy of certain European nations; that of an agronomist and soil scientist who is competent to pass upon the practical agricultural aspect of the matter, and, finally, that of a student of plant science who approaches the subject with some knowledge of the factors which ensure the maximum growth and productivity of plants.

Mr. Willcox's thesis is stated by the title of the book: "Nations Can Live at Home". In a word, it is his contention that the new science of "Agrobiology" (the scientific management of field crops) is competent at this very moment to supply each nation through its domestic agriculture, with all the food requisite to the healthy maintenance of its people. More than this, the author asserts that the limits of increased food production have not even been sighted.

Ever since the eighteenth century the spectre of Malthus has stalked the world to render uneasy the repose of statesmen and economists, for Malthus taught "that population tends to multiply faster than its means of subsistence can be made to do, and that when this occurs the lower or weaker classes must suffer from lack of food; that unless an increase of population be checked by prudential restraint, poverty is inevitable; and that the multiplying of the population will be checked by poverty, vice, or some other cause of suffering."

That this threat to the cupboards of nations is no idle one, is abundantly

[1] *Nations Can Live at Home*, by O. W. Willcox, Ph.D.; W. W. Norton and Co., Inc., New York, 1935.

attested by the dire spectacle of China, swarming with humanity and wasted by recurrent famines, or of Japan and Italy forced, as they seem to believe, into careers of war and invasion to save their own nations from starvation. Indeed, it was the perusal of Malthus's writings that gave Darwin his first inkling of the giant struggle for existence which became the cornerstone of his theory.

Until the turn of the century, population pressure upon food supply was, in a measure, minimized by the opening of new agricultural lands to emigrating peoples. To-day, however, the frontier is gone, and once more the dark shadow of a hungry world looms before the nations. Mussolini, for example, has stated Italy's apparent case in cold, realistic sentences: "According as our population increases there are three outlets: to condemn ourselves to voluntary sterility—and Italians are too intelligent for that; to wage war; or to place our surplus population elsewhere." Recent events have made evident upon which of the outlets *Il Duce's* choice has fallen. War, say the realists, is the ultimate term of the Malthusian law. They see the futility of the dream of an all-sufficing international trade since this palliative to national want is at best inconstant and temporary, subject to the vicissitudes of tariff barriers, glutted markets, foreign competition, and, worst of all, to the menace of war.

With a brave array of statistics and graphs to support his statements, the author of the book before us challenges the Malthusian prophets of disaster, and asserts that agronomy (the art of field-crop production) has, within the last ten years, been lifted from the realm of chance and blundering empiricism in which it has been floundering for twenty thousand years, and has been placed upon a basis so exact that "all agrobiologic phenomena may be dimensioned, permuted, controlled and brought to a finish with quantitative exactitude". This is a statement so startling that it is small wonder one's first reaction to it is ironical. Another "Send-a-Dime Scheme", another "Townsend Plan", we say wearily, and prepare to close the book. But as we read on, we begin to realize that this man is no dreamer; he is a hard-headed scientist dealing with experimentally-attested facts. To be sure his prophecies are often based upon experiments carried out in small acreages, but just as the compound formed in the test-tube epitomizes the production of the same chemical in commercial quantities, so the small acreage crop epitomizes a parallel large-scale production, provided the conditions can be duplicated on a commensurate scale.

What, then, are some of the conditions of this new agrobiology which is to lay the ghost of the Rev. Mr. Malthus?

Its first principle is the well-known constancy of genotypes. In other words, strains of plants breed true just as strains of poultry or cattle or sheep breed true. And just as some strains or breeds of cattle produce more milk than others, so some strains of plants will enormously outdistance others in their production of grain or fruit or other food-product. We must then, say the agrobiologists, rigorously exclude from cultivation all the strains of vegetables which give low yields, and grow only selected and thoroughly tested "perultra agrotypes". The theoretic limit of production of various food-plants can be mathematically calculated, and many of our best agrotypes have been brought close to the

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maximum yield. The theoretical maximum return from wheat, for example, is 171 bushels per acre, and already we have American wheat varieties yielding 122½ bushels per acre. Indian corn has a theoretical maximum yield of 225 bushels per acre, and this has actually been reached in a certain strain. These strains or varieties will continue year after year to give the same yield under the same combination of environmental factors.

So the second principle of the new agrobiology is concerned with the environment under which the crop is to grow. This consists, in essence, of a "perfertile soil", that is, a soil which contains the plant food-salts in exactly the right amounts and correct relative proportions for the optimum needs of the plant. Such knowledge is in our hands, and the soil requirements of any plant can be "blue-printed" with exactitude. The soil, as a complex of inconstant and variable factors over which the older empirical agriculture so taxed itself, is now regarded as little more than a theatre of action—a kind of receptacle to hold the plants. Given a loose, non-poisonous soil, supplied artificially with the correct proportions of some half-dozen chemical elements in which it is likely to be deficient, and any crop plant adapted to that particular climate will give its maximum yield. The author sweeps aside, and we think a bit too brashly, the inconstant and incalculable factors of the environment—those "acts of God" which have harassed the farmer from the beginning. In his own breezy way he writes: "Drought; too much rain; irregular rain; bugs in, on and above the soil; rust, blight and other plant diseases; microbiological complexes, soil complexes, plant physiological complexes, not omitting mental complexes; all these and more beside take their toll of the ordinary farmer's crops . . . (but) the arms that may be used are known. The conduct of agricultural operations is something to be approached in the spirit of Grant who ordered one of his officers to 'stop thinking about what Lee is going to do, and think about what we are going to do'. The upshot of it all is that plant life, in any given closed system, can be dealt with as a constant, measurable quantity, and that growth factors can be dealt with as forces having definite and measurable magnitudes".

To this statement my agronomical friend and myself both give our assent. The statistics of phenomenal wheat production in Italy, of rice in Japan, of corn in America, of sugar-cane in Java—all grown according to the strictest agrobiological conditions—are convincing.

Armed, therefore, with this weapon, the author advances upon the Malthusians. Professor East has calculated that 3.2 acres of land are required to feed one average individual for one year at our present American standard of living. Allowing for the lower standard of more densely populated countries, we may set the ratio as one person to 2.5 acres. Since only about 40% of the land area of the globe is cultivable, the theoretical limit of population is set at 5,200 million people, which, under present conditions of population increase, will be reached in about 100 years.

Mr. Willcox brushes these figures aside and sets down a "primary number" of 51 persons per acre as a feasible ratio, which is equivalent to a population density of 32,640 per square mile. This number, he avers, can be much increased

by the introduction of various secondary factors into agriculture, such as multiplied crops in a single season, indirect production of proteins, etc. At present there is no European nation with a population density of more than 1500 per square mile.

We need not follow him along the lines of his further speculations, in whose higher flights he sets forth certain theoretical population figures of astronomical magnitude which would seem to fill the earth so full that people would have to sleep edgewise like the exiles in Professor Tchernavin's Soviet lumber camps. Let us hope that long before it happens the famous fourth dimension may open up to colonization. Neither are we greatly impressed by our author's attempt to hitch his agrobiological wagon to the will-o'-the-wisp of pacifism.

The practical conclusion of the matter is more to our taste. We think that "nations can live at home" if they are prepared to enter upon a regimen of scientifically controlled agriculture, and can find or can develop a staff of agrobiological experts competent to handle the matter. Their farmers must be prepared to submit their lands to expert direction and to relinquish their time-honoured concessions and empirical practices. No small problem this, under any sort of administration, but an enlightened gentleman-farmer class, such as England possesses, might accomplish it. Under a democratic state-management, we should expect the same muddle of incompetent direction, half-baked theory, egregious waste, personal friction and bureaucratic interference, which characterizes the "New Deal" under whose dubious blessings it is our privilege to live. A dictator-state would also make for success. In fact, one regrets that Mussolini did not keep to his *vittoria del grano*, which met with such astonishing success in 1934 that Professor Thomasi of the Institute of Agricultural Chemistry at Rome, making a thoroughgoing application of agrobiological principles to some new strains of wheat, produced 171 bushels to the acre, which is practically the theoretical highest possible yield. Even the farmers of the provinces, under the direction of agronomical experts, and using inferior wheat strains, rolled up yields as high as 121 bushels per acre—71% of the theoretical maximum. When one compares this figure with the 14 bushels per acre, which is the average yield in the United States, one is less inclined to class Mr. Willcox with the utopians.

We think therefore, that if the agrarian population of England is prepared to submit itself to the necessary regimen, it can provide every man, woman and child in the British Isles with an ample and attractive diet carrying the proportions of proteids, carbohydrates and fats which are essential to health, and, furthermore, we are inclined to believe with Mr. Willcox, that the present population could "more than double without curtailing a standard of living much above the average they are now enjoying. . . . Britain cannot be starved when Britons have put their agriculture in order and have squared their treatment of the land with the realities of science".

R.E.T.

WITHOUT CENSOR

VI.

OUR journey across France from Bordeaux to Baccarat, near Lunéville, took us through Périgueux, Limoges, Châteauroux, and Bourges; from there we doubled and twisted backward and forward, often waiting for hours until some train, coming from the front with wounded, or on its way to the lines with troops or supplies, had passed us. We saw nothing, of course, of the cities and towns through which we passed, for, even when we stopped, we never left the railway station. There was a reason for this: the French *Chefs de Gare* had developed, we had been warned, an unfortunate habit of arbitrarily uncoupling several cars from the end of troop trains whenever they happened to think that they were too long and too heavy, without saying anything about it to anyone. A troop train, so mutilated, would pull out minus cars, men and equipment, and often the loss would not be discovered for several hours, especially if it had taken place at night. Accordingly, we put out a guard all along the train at each stop, day and night, and the Officer of the Day was on twenty-four hour duty, his sleep being constantly interrupted by the necessity of making inspections when we were halted in pitchy darkness. Our forward sections had all been warned of this amusing idiosyncrasy on the part of the railway management; none the less, a captain in charge of one of the sections succeeded in losing four cars one night, with their contents, living and inanimate. The Colonel was furious, and rightly, when he heard of this upon his arrival, and the unfortunate captain was shipped off in a motor-cycle side-car, with an orderly, with instructions not to come back at all if he could not find his cars. As neither of them could speak any French, I often wondered what kind of time they had; but I heard later on, after I had left the Ammunition Train, that they had finally returned triumphant, bringing, so to speak, their sheaves with them.

We did not receive the same whole-hearted and friendly greetings from the French on this trip as we had during our progress from Brest to Bordeaux; in fact, our arrival at a town did not produce even a ripple of enthusiasm. Troop movements were an old story in this part of France, and already many trains full of American soldiers had passed through from the training-areas and ports in the south, while, with the people on the coast, the sight of Americans had still been a novelty and the passage of any troops fairly infrequent. We thoroughly enjoyed every moment of that trip. The country through which we passed was beautiful, and we proceeded so slowly that we had plenty of time to let the beauty sink in. Our superior railway carriage, which we had requisitioned at Bordeaux, was very comfortable, and we had nothing to do but rest, sleep, talk, read and admire the scenery. We must have covered over five hundred miles on that trip, allowing for all our twistings and doublings back and forth. We reached Chaumont (Haute Marne), where General Headquarters, American Expeditionary Forces,

was located, on the afternoon of the second day, but only stopped in the station there for a few minutes, proceeding through that night, with many stops, and finally arriving at Baccarat early on the morning of July 16th.

As we disentrained, we heard the sound of firing, and, looking overhead, we saw a Boche plane going back fast toward the German lines. The archies were firing, and all around the plane were black patches in the sky where shrapnel was bursting, none of it, however, taking effect. Our men crowded out into the road, and stood gazing up with open mouths, always a poor thing to do in the circumstances, as those pieces of shrapnel have to come down to earth again. However, this particular party was over, and we had only arrived in time to see the end of it. The Boche frequently sent observation planes over in the day time, for purposes of reconnaissance. We were told that when they were in this part of France in 1914, and before they were forced out, they had planted spies among the civilians and had subsidized disloyal elements in the population, with a view to obtaining information later as to what was going on behind the French lines. One way of obtaining this information was from the air. Whenever there was something to impart, some peasant would arrange cows in a fixed order in a certain corner of a field, or washing would be laid out on bushes or on the grass in a pattern agreed upon beforehand to convey a definite meaning, and the German plane would read this panel from the air, and would report accordingly upon its return. But there were other ways, as well, in which information passed, and we received an illustration of this a few days later. A captain in one of the infantry regiments of our Division, a man whom I had known quite well in my company at Plattsburgh, was very anxious to try out a daylight trench raid on the Boche. He devised a plan, which was submitted to, and approved by, his regimental commander and his brigade commander. But the projected raid became too well known beforehand. It was talked about throughout the Division, and on the day and at the hour appointed, a number of officers from other units, who had no business even to know about it, were in the vicinity, under cover, waiting to observe the show. The raiding party found the front line German trenches empty, and proceeded to the second line trenches, where they were suddenly surrounded by vastly superior numbers of the enemy; of that raiding party, if I remember correctly, only about half came back, the others all being captured or killed, and among those who were killed was the captain, my friend. There was no doubt whatever that the Germans received information about the raid beforehand, through one of their usual sources—which was not to be wondered at in view of the lack of secrecy—and arranged the reception for our raiding party in advance. The affair created a *furor* at the time, but it was in process of being hushed up when I left the Division, and I never heard the final outcome.

It was so well known, in the Vosges, that information identifying Allied units and explaining circulation and movements of Allied troops was constantly reaching the Germans, that it was decided to take advantage of this, and, just before our St. Mihiel operation started early in September, to stage a fake attack in the Vosges, with a view to holding German divisions in place and preventing their

opposing us at St. Mihiel. I quote from the Report of the First Army, American Expeditionary Forces. "The heavy movement of American Divisions towards Lorraine aroused speculation among the inhabitants as to the prospects for an American offensive in that region. While such an attack was logical and to be expected, it is probable also that the enemy gained some information regarding our concentration, which may have led him to think we were planning an attack on the St. Mihiel front. To counteract this probability the Commander-in-Chief, American Expeditionary Forces, took advantage of the presence of several American divisions in the Vosges to deceive the enemy as to our intentions. An army corps commander with his staff was ordered to Belfort with instructions to establish an Army Headquarters at that place and to draft the plans and carry out the reconnaissances preparatory to an offensive operation toward Mulhouse. Offices were opened, staff reconnoitering parties were sent out and groups from American divisions were ordered to that front. Finally, a carbon copy of the orders directing these preliminary steps, was intentionally left in a hotel at Belfort by a staff officer from General Headquarters, and it quickly disappeared. The success of this ruse was apparent, as the Germans concentrated several divisions in reserve in that vicinity."

The Baccarat sector was what the French called *bon secteur;* troops just out of the line and in need of a rest, or new units, like our own, engaged in their first experience in holding trenches, were sent there by both sides, and there was a kind of gentleman's agreement with the enemy not to start anything serious. Activity was confined to an occasional trench raid, and to a mild daily artillery interchange, in the course of which a few shells were thrown over by each side. At night, however, Boche planes used to come over and make things disagreeable. The 77th Division took over the sector from the 42nd Division, American National Guard, which departed for the Marne area for its first active service. Our Division was thus reunited for the first time since April, when the movement of our units overseas had started from Camp Upton. Our infantry had learned a great deal from their experience on the British front, while we, who had been at Camp Souge, had improved as a result of our training there; so the Division Staff were well pleased with the appearance and feel of the command, and full of high hopes as to its ability.

Owing to the inactivity on that part of the front, there was a fairly large civilian population in Baccarat, and domestic life among the French went on much as usual, although none of the town's activities or factories were in operation. But there was a vastly different appearance and atmosphere, both as regards the town and the people, compared with those towns which we had seen in the south. The War had set its mark on the place. Our men were in billets for the first time, and we had close contact with the French people which living with them brings. The houses, while undemolished by shell fire, were running down and badly in need of repair. Food was scarce, and the population was under-nourished, particularly the children, who were wild and *farouche* and suspicious. A sure way to the hearts of the women was to make them presents of sugar and of white Army bread, and this our men speedily discovered. For

almost four long years, troops had been billeted with those people in constant succession. Women and children had lived among rough men. They had had no privacy at all. Small wonder that they were apathetic, that they did not receive us with open arms. To them, we were just another lot, to be replaced after a while by others, without end. I have often thought that the atmosphere of Baccarat was sadder, more drab and hopeless, than even that of those towns on the more active stretches of the front which I saw later, where the small remaining civilian population was in hourly danger of death. At Baccarat, they were fairly safe. But the great steam-roller of war had passed over them, and had left them flat; they were dull and dead. It was pathetic beyond words. Yet, many of our men did succeed in arousing them; they won the children's hearts, and the liking of the women. Often I would come across two or three of our soldiers sitting against a wall in the sun, with several old women who were doing their mending and knitting. The soldiers could not converse, but it felt like home in a way to them, and, unconsciously to themselves, they were creating a friendly atmosphere which bore fruit later, for I heard much more of children's laughter in the vicinity of our billets at the end of my two weeks' tour of duty there, than I had heard at first.

The Colonel and I were billeted in a little stucco two-story house on the edge of the town, the owner and sole occupant of which was an old lady in her seventies. We had started a Headquarters mess in another house a little way down the street, where we went for meals, and where we subsisted simply on the Army ration. At night, the Boche planes would come over, and, flying low, would machine-gun the town, primarily for the purpose of breaking down the morale of the newly arrived American troops, but also in the hope that they would catch unwary loiterers in the streets. When the first of these entertainments started, the Colonel and I were at home, and we quickly took stock of our surroundings, with a view to occupying the best strategic position available. We decided to stand in the front hallway of the flimsy structure, as there appeared to be more thicknesses of wall and ceiling between us and the outside world at that point than at any other. In a moment or two the old lady joined us; apparently she too, from long experience, had picked this same spot as being the most protected. As the din and uproar increased, she began to tremble, and seizing my arm, she kept saying, *Ah! J'ai peur, j'ai peur!* "What does she say?", asked the Colonel, who even at this late date had acquired no French at all. I repeated her words, and explained their meaning. "Quite so", said the Colonel, "tell her that I have got peur myself". Instead, I translated this into some words of encouragement and cheer, and patted her on the shoulder, and she smiled, and quieted down again until the disturbance was over. We spent some time together, the three of us, in the evenings in this way during my stay, and the poor old thing was always terrified. It must have been a great relief to her to have two officers billeted on her, who could keep her company. Her morale was broken; she had stood this sort of thing for innumerable nights, sometimes alone, and it had just been too much. I grew quite fond of our old lady, but I succeeded in getting into her bad graces before I left. I had with me a portable rubber bath tub, which folded up

into a small compass, and went easily into a corner of my bedding-roll. It was one of the greatest assets which I have ever possessed, and during my whole stay in France I was able to enjoy baths when others could not have them. It was unfolded and set out every morning by my faithful striker, and filled with water from my canvas bucket. But it was a tricky contraption, for unless one watched out, the thing would meanly curl over on one of its many folds, and let the water out on the floor. The Colonel had the room directly under mine. I was splashing away one morning, and thinking that my striker had not given me as much water as usual, when suddenly I heard stentorian tones from the room below, and then the Colonel's voice, inquiring in a loud bellow what I thought I was doing up there anyway. In alarm, I looked hastily over my shoulder, only to see that, as soon as my back had been turned, my tricky old tub had lain down on me completely in one corner, and that there were the remains of a lake on the floor. The lake itself had rapidly oozed through the flimsy flooring, and the Colonel had been awakened from a sound sleep by water dripping on his face. When the old lady saw the unfortunate results as far as her property was concerned, she was furious, and on the spot she demanded exorbitant and extortionate damages. I felt like explaining to her that I did not want to buy the house, but calmness and moderation prevailed; and I finally settled with her for an amount which should have enabled her to have both rooms entirely done over, but which I did not in the least object to giving her, hoping that she would make the repairs herself, which she probably did, and that she would use the money for some small comforts which would make her lot more bearable.

The Colonel, upon returning from Division Headquarters where he had reported the day of our arrival, informed me that the letters which he had written on my behalf from Camp Souge recommending me for staff work, had indeed borne fruit, and that I was to leave them, and to go to the Headquarters First American Army (Field Army) which had just been formed. He said that my orders had not yet come through, but that there was no doubt whatever about it, as it had been arranged over the telephone by 77th Division Headquarters with General Headquarters at Chaumont, and that I had better begin without delay to turn over my duties to my successor as Adjutant, whom he proceeded immediately to appoint, and to make him familiar with all routine matters of administration. This I at once started to do, and then remembered the fact that, over the preceding months, I had signed receipts for a considerable amount of government property and equipment of various kinds. My name was on the papers. What was I going to say if, after the War, I was summoned to Washington and asked what I had done with it all? I hastily decided that the new Adjutant was far better able to afford these luxuries than I. So I had duplicate receipts made up for everything, on which the new Adjutant received from me these various articles, and I watched him sign on the dotted line with a feeling of some relief. About this time all officers in the Division received orders to discard locker trunks, which were to be sent to the rear until after the War, and to reduce to field equipment. The Colonel advised me, as I was leaving them, not to give up anything until I had to, and to hold on to mine. This I did;

and I succeeded in doing so permanently, as I was always able later on to command transportation, and to get myself moved about when necessity arose. The turning over of my duties to my successor only took a day or so, and then, as my orders still failed to come through, I was without any duties, although still officially assigned to my old unit. I proceeded, therefore, to enjoy myself, paying visits to friends in the infantry in their front line P. Cs. (Posts of Command); calling daily on the Chief of Staff to inquire about my orders, and stopping to talk, and to hear the gossip, with friends at Division Headquarters; also motoring about with the Colonel on his trips of inspection and supervision as a sort of guest. One afternoon we were on a road that we did not know, and had proceeded along it for some distance, when we were stopped by loud shouts, and were told by some soldiers that if we went three hundred yards more in that direction, we should be in No Man's Land. We might have continued calmly until we had arrived within the enemy lines and been quietly captured, which would have been an ignominious ending for high hopes.

Finally, on July 29th, my orders came through from Division Headquarters, directing me, in accordance with instructions, G. H. Q., American E. F., to proceed to La Ferté-sous-Jouarre, between Château-Thierry and Paris, reporting upon arrival to the Chief of Staff, 1st Army, for duty, and stating that the travel directed was necessary in the military service. I finished my packing, which did not take long; had my order ornamented with all the official stamps which the Division Provost Marshal and the French authorities seemed to consider necessary before I could start on my travels, and found that I could get a train to Paris late that afternoon. All roads led to Paris; no matter where the place was to which one was going, it was always quicker to go there viâ Paris than to try to go there direct. I spent most of that day going about saying good-bye to my fellow officers, most of whom as a matter of fact I have not seen again to this day, and to some of the enlisted men. I also bade an affectionate farewell to my faithful striker, for I realized that it was not possible for anyone as low in rank as a captain to travel about with a personal servant; one must be at least a brigadier general to be able to do that! After luncheon I started to take my leave of the Colonel, but he told me that his time was his own that day, and that he was going to see me off. He seemed genuinely sorry to have me go. I made a little speech, which I most whole-heartedly meant, in which I thanked him for his kindnesses, for his patience with my mistakes and ignorance, and for all that I felt that I had learned from him personally and while under his command. He seemed quite touched by this, and said in a gruff voice,—"Not at all, Captain, I have a great many things to thank you for". Official sounds of commotion then warned me that the train was about to start, so I saluted him officially for the last time. My salute was returned, and he shook me by the hand, and wished me good luck, and I climbed into the already-moving carriage. That phase of my Army experience was over.

It is outside the province of an article such as this to attempt to give in any detail an account of general military operations, or to trace the progress and sequence of events on the Western Front. All that is a matter of record and of

history. These articles are merely an endeavour to recount the experiences of one individual in what he happened to see of the Great War. But at this point it may be of interest to outline briefly something of the military situation as it stood in the closing days of July, 1918, and more specifically in regard to the American troops that were engaged, and as it affected them, and to relate something of the formation and earlier accomplishments of those larger field units of the American Army with which I was to be identified from then until the Armistice, and afterwards. When I received my orders at Baccarat to report to Headquarters of the First American Army in the field, I knew nothing whatever of what had been done in the American Expeditionary Forces in regard to the organization of those larger units and higher staffs, nor did I have the slightest idea as to what extent, or exactly where, American troops were actually in action. Owing to our isolation up to that time in geographical terms, I had been as far removed from any knowledge of what was going on as if I had been at the North Pole. Nor did I know then that the day upon which I had arrived at Baccarat, July 16th, had to all intents and purposes marked the turning point of the War on the Western Front. On that day, all of France had been in suspense; on that day, the Germans had wavered. On July seventeenth, the enemy had been stopped, and the following day marked the actual beginning, in the light of retrospect, of his long retreat. I did not know anything of all that then, nor of what I am now about to set down. I learned it later, after I had arrived at my destination, and had entered upon my new duties. All that I knew when I left Baccarat was, that I had one, single, impelling idea,—to get to La Férte-sous-Jouarre just as fast as I could and find out what was going on.

Briefly, then, the great Château-Thierry salient was so extended and deep, and so exposed to attack on the flanks that, from the German point of view, it was impossible to push further ahead at its apex until the salient had been widened; moreover, the Germans realized that, unless this could be done, the salient itself was quite likely to prove untenable in the long run. Initial attempts during the summer by the Germans to effect this widening, had failed. Then Ludendorff decided upon the great offensive, which took place in July, and which was widely heralded in Germany as the final operation which was to win the War. I have always understood that, while the main objective was Paris, this operation was divided into several phases, and that there were several preliminary objectives which had to be gained first and simultaneously, before the success of the whole plan could be assured; failure at any one point would jeopardize the entire offensive. Ludendorff decided to attack at each side of Rheims, the heaviest attack being by the German First and Third Armies in the Champagne, east of Rheims. There was to be another attack against the Montagne de Rheims, which was planned to cross the Marne and then turn up to Épernay, joining the two phases of the German offensive in that area. At the same time, two other German armies were to attack on the Amiens-Montdidier front, breaking through at that point and driving straight for Paris from the northwest. Simultaneously, there was to be an attack against the British in Flanders. The supposedly victorious German troops from the operations at Rheims, after

effecting a junction, were to sweep down the Marne on Paris from the northeast, and victory would be won. On the Allied side, the order of battle, from left to right, was General Mangin's Tenth Army; General Degoutte's Sixth Army; General Berthelot's Fifth Army; and General Gouraud's Fourth Army. In the Sixth French Army, under General Degoutte, was the First American Army Corps, commanded by Major General Hunter Liggett, and the Second, Third, Fourth, Twenty-sixth and Twenty-eighth American Divisions, while the Forty-second American Division was with General Gouraud's Fourth French Army. The American Army in France at that time consisted of four divisions in line and two in reserve on the Château-Thierry front; the Forty-second Division with the Fourth French Army; four divisions in line with the French in quiet sectors in Alsace-Lorraine, one of which was my own Division, the Seventy-seventh; five divisions with the British; four in training areas, and four which had just arrived.

The First American Army Corps, to which I was so soon to be sent from Headquarters First Army and temporarily attached, had been formed, and its staff organized, during the winter of 1917-1918, in readiness for later events, with station at Neufchâteau, where it had taken over administrative command of various American divisions then in training in the Vosges. The French system of corps command had been at once adopted, under which an army corps consisted of its staff, various technical troops, the corps artillery, and such divisions as happened at the time to be in line on the corps front, or in reserve in the corps area. The corps organization, therefore, was a permanent one, while the divisions under its command changed from time to time, as reliefs were effected. An army-corps staff was divided into three sections: G-1, in control of administration and personnel; G-2, in control of military intelligence; and G-3, having to do with operations and training. An American field-army staff had exactly the same organization, with the addition of another section, G-4, which functioned with the Service of Supplies. With both the army corps and the field army, there was in addition an administrative staff consisting of an Adjutant General, Chief Signal officer, Chief Air officer, Chief Medical officer and Chief Engineer officer, each with the personnel necessary to assist him. Owing to the size of our divisions, which were much larger than those of either the French or English, consisting as they did of about 28,000 officers and men each, an American army corps in the Great War numbered approximately from 125,000 to 150,000 men; this was about the size of a French field army, if I remember correctly, and was several times the size of an army corps during our Civil War. The Staff of the First American Army Corps had thus been working together for some while, and had perfected its organization and increased its efficiency so that it was ready to function when the time came for it to take over a field command. On June 21st, the First American Army Corps had been ordered to La Férte-sous-Jouarre with instructions to prepare to take over a command in that area. Constant conferences were held with General Degoutte, and on July 4th the First Corps took over a sector for the first time. Among the troops then assigned to come under the command of our First Corps was a French Division; it was

the first time that French troops had served under American command since the War of the Revolution, and the first tactical operation of an American Army Corps since our Civil War.

The First American Army Corps had thus participated in the fighting on the Château-Thierry front in the early days of July, and up to the time that the great German offensive broke in the middle of that month. The complete failure of that offensive, and all that happened, is too well known to be enlarged upon here. General Gouraud, with the Fourth French Army, had stopped the First and Third German Armies in the Champagne by the end of the second day, thus at the same time rendering abortive the proposed German drive on Paris from the northwest. The German Seventh Army, however, had crossed the Marne, and had penetrated in depth against General Berthelot and General Degoutte, and, with the Champagne attack a failure, the enemy had then proceeded to throw additional forces into the Marne battle. Allied reserves, however, were rushed to meet them, and General Foch had counter-attacked the following day on a wide front. The Forty-second American Division had been withdrawn from the Fourth French Army, and had been added to the First American Army Corps at Château-Thierry, the evacuation of which town by the enemy, our First Corps had been instrumental in effecting. On the night of July 25th-26th, the Forty-second Division had taken over the entire front of the First American Army Corps, and, supported by divisional and corps artillery, the Division had attacked on July 28th on a wide front and had crossed the Ourcq.

This, then, is a very sketchy presentation of the military situation on the Marne front as it existed July 29th, the day on which I took the train from Baccarat to Paris. I have dwelt at some length upon the early history and performances of the First American Army Corps because I was to be associated with that Staff under such interesting circumstances during the next month; because it was the first of our army corps to get into action; and because it was commanded by Major General Hunter Liggett, who, of the general officers in the American Expeditionary Forces, ranked in command in the field second to General Pershing himself. It is a striking commentary upon the efficiency of the Staff of the First American Army Corps, both then, and later on at St. Mihiel and in the Meuse-Argonne operation, that, after the Armistice, and when our Third Army which marched to the Rhine was formed, it was the Staff of the First Corps which was transferred, practically intact, to form the Staff of that Army of Occupation.

My journey to Paris was uneventful. My train meandered slowly along, reaching Nancy in the late evening, and was practically empty to that point. We waited for a long time in the station at Nancy, and, as it was a clear, moonlit evening, I fully expected that we should find ourselves in time for the usual nightly bombing, during which the railroad yards were always a favourite target; it was too early, however, for the German hate to start. During the night, the train filled up. It pursued a circuitous route somewhere just back of the lines, and at each stop my carriage was invaded by French officers and men, off on leave from their units; before long every seat in my compartment was occupied

by French officers, with several others sleeping on the floor, while the corridor of the train was so thickly covered with sleeping *poilus* that it was not possible to walk along it. I had taken the precaution of settling myself early in the evening in the seat by the window facing forward; the windows would not open, but the window in the door did, and I had left it open in order to have plenty of fresh air. The first French officer who entered, saw this open window, gave an exclamation of horror, and made a bee-line for it and closed it. By the time the compartment and corridor had filled up, the smell of unwashed humanity was something overpowering and terrific. I waited until unmistakable sounds in different keys told me that, beyond peradventure, all the French officers were asleep. I leaned quietly forward, and opened the window in the door again, and, wrapping myself anew in my overcoat, I waited to see what would happen. Before long I heard the sound of grumbling, and an officer arose shivering, and, cursing fluently, made his way over prostrate forms to the window and closed it. I observed the spot to which he returned, and when that corner of the carriage was once more contributing its share to the general harmony, I again opened the window. That time, I got to sleep before it was closed, but the breathless and pungent atmosphere was too much to stand and I awoke again, and again I opened the window. I spent that entire night opening that window at intervals, after repeated closings on the part of the French Army. If I had not done so, I should have been asphyxiated. I never understood why they did not discover that it was I who was giving them so much trouble and take drastic action upon my person; but I finally decided that it must have been a different French officer each time.

Upon arriving in Paris the following morning, I made straight for the Hotel Continental, settled myself in a room, ordered two breakfasts and ate them both, and, unpacking my belongings, sent for the valet and had all my uniforms pressed. After this, and a piping hot bath, I felt sufficiently improved to telephone one of my relatives, a major on the Staff of the American Chief of Air Service who was stationed at that time in Paris, and arranged to have luncheon with him at another hotel, where we exchanged family news and I found out what he knew about the War. After luncheon I moved myself and my belongings to the railway station, and took a train for La Férte-sous-Jouarre, passing through Meaux en route, and arriving at my destination late in the afternoon. Upon alighting from the train, I found the railway station in ruins; it had been entirely demolished by German air-plane bombs the night before. Leaving my luggage under the eye of an American sentry, I made my way through the town, which everywhere showed signs of aerial bombardment, and was directed to the Headquarters First American Army, which was located in a large private dwelling. I found that the Chief of Staff was absent, and that he would not be back until the following morning, so I looked up the Billeting Officer and secured a room, assembled my luggage from the station with some difficulty, and, after a supper of biscuit and sardines from my bedding-roll, settled down for the night.

CENTURION.

(To be continued)

INDRAWAL

OUR GREAT OPPORTUNITY

IT was stated at the last Convention that the time might come when we should have to dig ourselves in, when the very existence of the Society will be hidden from the surface of the earth, cut down to the root; that the day will probably come when there will be no more public meetings, no more QUARTERLY as we now know it, no more Conventions.

This statement startled and, perhaps, dismayed some of our members, in spite of the care that was exercised to prevent misunderstandings and unwarranted fears over the implications of what was said. For example, we were told that we should not make the mistake of supposing that cutting down to the root will mean that the Movement is being snuffed out, or has ended in failure; but, on the contrary, that indrawal means transference of energy from the outer to the inner,—the perpetuation of what would otherwise die; that the process is not a negative, but a positive one; that what it means, in short, is discipleship. Thus it was made abundantly clear that if we wish to form part of the root—the "nucleus"—we cannot toy with the idea of discipleship; we must embrace it whole-heartedly, with singleness of purpose and with fixity of attention and will.

At the meetings of the New York Branch during the season of 1934-35, much was said explicitly as well as implicitly on the subject of indrawal. In an address in which was discussed the rise and fall and cyclic progress of civilization, and its corollary—reincarnation, the cyclic progress of the soul of man,—it was shown that this cyclic movement, this alternation of opposites, is a law of nature and is found everywhere; that "the succession of alternates through which our lives must be lived, compels us to recognize that we must take the thing which comes to us and store it up within ourselves where it will be useful to us, just as we take air into our lungs". By this cyclic alternation of receiving a gift and then being deprived of it, we are given an opportunity to utilize the gift, to embody it and make it ours, to learn self-reliance, and thereby acquire the ability to carry on, when the original inspiration has been withdrawn. Cavé, in *Fragments* (Vol. 1), advises those who would seek the Masters to learn the first step, which is "Isolation"—to "Stand Alone",—and the second step, the other side of the first, which is "Obedience". "Isolation" is only a step in the process of learning to think and act for oneself, so as to "know only that which you yourself have tried and tested". After we have in this way acquired a little knowledge, we should not allow a feeling of self-satisfaction to develop, as though we ourselves had accomplished anything, because the simple truth is that everything we have and are that is in any sense real, is a gift from our Master. And one of the gifts of the Masters is this period of indrawal, when in order to find our own Master

we must seek him with all our heart, and, as *Fragments* warns, must rise to his plane, for in actual fact the Masters cannot descend to ours.

So, then, the crux of the matter is: Are we prepared, do we really desire, to enter into that inner life of the spirit, or are we content to drift and to remain unwilling to make the effort,—that fierce, indomitable effort of will referred to in *Light on the Path*—to grasp this opportunity, this invitation, which the cycle of indrawal presents? Do we believe in, are we convinced of the truth of the statement that the inner life is that which all must eventually lead, and the path of discipleship that along which all must eventually travel? Enough was said at Convention to convince us mentally that this is true, but have we arrived at an inner conviction strong enough to impel us to action, using all the force and energy of which we are capable? Or, shall we continue to dissipate that force and energy upon outer things, which are but feeble and transitory shadows of the real world?

Another aspect of the meaning of indrawal, given at Convention, was supplemented in an address before the New York Branch, when it was pointed out that science, having compassed the whole physical universe, discovers that it is limited, and is, in fact, empty. It was said that when our thought has compassed the whole physical universe and reached its boundaries, it is like the outgoing of the breath when it has been exhaled. Then we have to draw it in again. In the same way, when we have reached the turning point of a cycle, we should reverse our polarity; when we have gone out to the furthest limits, we should prepare to go within. We can do this only by looking at life in terms of spiritual law, by realizing that the external universe is but a manifestation of spiritual law, and that the causal factors are in consciousness. It was suggested that in the same way in which science has discovered this emptiness of the universe, we should have been able to discover the emptiness of all external things, and that the personality—the ordinary everyday level of consciousness of the ordinary person—is a mere dream, a mirage of our past consciousness. It was further pointed out that, once we have discovered this fact for ourselves, we should not stop there, but should fill the void with real thoughts, real perception and real understanding.

How, then, can we turn this opportunity of indrawal into a positive process? We should regard it as a gift from the Masters,—an opportunity to learn and to grow in understanding. After a cycle of inspiration and help through the QUARTERLY, Branch meetings and the Annual Conventions of the Society, we should have been able to store up within ourselves material which would serve to transform our lives completely if we made use of but a small portion of what we have received. Year after year at our Conventions, delegate after delegate has expressed appreciation and gratitude for the help and inspiration received from the QUARTERLY. If all outer activities of the Society should cease, the thirty-two volumes of the QUARTERLY already published contain all and more than any of us need to work with indefinitely, if we will but *use* the gifts that have been poured out upon us with unselfish love and unsparing devotion, and show our appreciation by a more determined effort to embody the ideals which they

hold before us. If, for example, we should take the following lines from "Fragments" (QUARTERLY, July, 1935) as a subject for meditation and resolution, to be carried out in our everyday life, there would be no occasion for uneasiness or dismay at the prospect of the Movement being cut down to the root:

"Who knows where earth begins and heaven ends; who can fix the boundary of that inner world and this, determine what is seen and what unseen?

"Why grant a boundary between ourselves and heaven? What boundary can there be, save sin?

"Living in heavenly-mindedness, we shall make earth one with heaven, remove the veil, nor know which pavement, whether clay or gold, we tread."

H.P.B., in *Isis*, writes of a beautiful Chinese legend which illustrates "living in heavenly-mindedness". A pious matron and her two servants lived entirely "with thoughts turned to the Land of Enlightenment". One of the maid-servants died and passed over to the "Realm of Amita". The surviving maid told her mistress the following day that her deceased companion had appeared to her in a dream and said: "Thanks to the persevering supplications of our dear mistress, I am become an inhabitant of Paradise, and my blessedness is past all expression". The matron replied that she would believe what the deceased maid had said if she should appear to her. The next night the deceased appeared to her mistress. The lady asked if she might visit the "Land of Enlightenment", and the reply was that she had only to follow her hand-maiden. This she did in her dream, and perceived a lake of immeasurable expanse, overspread with innumerable red and white lotus flowers, of various sizes, some blooming, some fading. She asked what those flowers might signify. The maiden replied: "These are all human beings on the earth whose thoughts are turned to the Land of Enlightenment. The very first longing after the paradise of Amita produces a flower in the Celestial Lake, and this becomes daily larger and more glorious as the self-improvement of the person whom it represents advances; in the contrary case, it loses in glory and fades away." The matron desired to know the name of an enlightened one who reposed on one of the flowers, clad in waving and wondrously glistening raiment. Her whilom maid answered: "That is Yang-kie". Then asked she the name of another, and was answered: "That is Mahu". When the matron awoke, she sent to inquire for Yang-kie and Mahu. The first had already departed; the other was still alive and well. "And thus the lady learned that the soul of one who advances in holiness and never turns back, may be already a dweller in the Land of Enlightenment, even though the body still sojourn in this transitory world."

"Living in heavenly-mindedness!" Living toward, as it were, the "Land of Enlightenment"! Is not that what is meant by indrawal, and being cut down to the root? Is it not a transference of energy from the outer to the inner?

By filling the emptiness of our personalities with real thoughts, real perception and real understanding, we shall be living in the real world, and come at last to find that there is no boundary between us and heaven. If we act upon that realization, our lives will be made vibrant with purpose, our personalities will become transformed.

H.G.

FLOWERS

Vedi l'eccelso omai, e la larghezza
dell'eterno valor, poscia che tanti
speculi fatti s'ha, in che si spezza,
uno manendo in sè, come davanti.

See now the height and breadth of the eternal worth, since it hath made itself so many mirrors wherein it breaketh, remaining in itself one as before.—IL PARADISO.

THE morning sun has come out after the rain. Its light, broken into innumerable facets, glitters in the raindrops which hang upon the leaves and blades of grass. Myriads of little rainbows are flashing from these jewels, so soon to be drawn back into the sky. Scarcely less transitory than they, are the morning-glories open upon the twining vines over the trellis. They too are like a rainbow, their trumpets full of that vibrating colour only a translucent medium can show. Some are white, some a delicate pink, some a deep rose. There are others of a violent magenta, and others a dark ultramarine or purple. There are many large ones, of a marvellous blue to be found again only in early stained glass. They evoke the splendid windows of Chartres, *Notre Dame de la Belle Verrière*, where the Virgin and Child are surrounded by such a blue effulgence. They remind us that the One Light in manifesting itself, split into seven resplendent rays of colour. "Oh Splendour of God whereby I saw the lofty triumph of the truthful realm!"

It is in all the "Works of God", in manifested nature, that we see mirrored the facets of the one unbroken Light. Why do we see it? That we may love it and desire it. How do we see it? By that Sun's light which shines within our own hearts. Sometimes, indeed most times, we find it very difficult to see in the unevolved matter, where the idea is working, the divine paradigm; but, in flowers, men of all races and climes have perceived something of the beauty of perfection, and a deep corresponding significance. Jacob Boehme wrote of the Signature of All Things, the stamp upon them of the creative rays. I suppose that occult botany is based upon such correspondences, hidden to the undeveloped eye of the ordinary scientist. What marvellous secrets, what poems must be read by the Adept in these divine hieroglyphics!

In every religion some flower has had a peculiar sanctity and meaning. One thinks at once of the great rosy lotus of India and China, of the blue lotus of Egypt, of the roses and lilies of Christendom. In *The Secret Doctrine* there is a chapter devoted to the symbol of the lotus. In Hindu and Buddhist art it is everywhere represented. I remember a Sung figure of the Sleeping Avalokiteshwara: the great Creative Being slumbers, sunk in *pralaya*. His head is resting on one hand and his arm is supported by a kind of lion. The other hand still holds a rosary; its beads are world chains. From behind him spring lotus plants;

to the left, one leaf and a seed pod, the fruit and seed of the past; to the right, leaves and a bud, the world to come.

When we think of Egypt do we not remember at once the great columns of Karnak, whose shafts are stems bound together, and the capitals, lotus flowers? In Mexico there is the god Xochipilli. Upon his body are carved blossoms. He sits upon the ground, his hands upon his knees, and gazes with huge staring eyes upon the heaven whence come the sun and rain. In his intense concentration he is calling down these blessings upon earth. Then there is the goddess of flowers, Xochiquetzal. The lily of the West was brought down from heaven by the hand of the Archangel Gabriel. As for the rose, it is the form of paradise itself.

All over the world, men have brought offerings of flowers to the gods, because of their beauty, and because they saw in them, perhaps, a supreme example of the florescence of a divine idea, something as pure and complete as the heart of the perfected Saint. At all festivals there are flowers, at banquets, at weddings, at funerals. The Hindu priests are hung with wreaths of marigolds and crowned with jasmine. The Polynesians wear leis of scented flowers. Alcibiades, when he leaned against the doorpost, looking in at Socrates, in the Symposium, was crowned with violets. The English lover hung garlands upon the threshold of his beloved on May Day morn. There is even a romantic spider who woos his lady with a bouquet of green leaves clasped in his front legs.

There is the Language of Flowers. Alas that now-a-days so few should study this delightful subject! "Syrian Mallow—consumed by love. Purple Hyacinth—sorrow. Jonquil—I desire a return of affection. Monarda—your whims are unbearable. Wild Tansy—I declare war against you." Someday, when the reaction sets in, this ought to be a part of the curriculum of all "Female Academies", just as flower arrangement is essential to the education of the Japanese girl. We live in an age when the arts of life are neglected!

In a description of the visit of Sudhana to the Abode of the Bodhisattvas—the "Tower which holds within itself an array of brilliantly shining objects"—it is said: "Asamkhyeyas (which means innumerable), Asamkhyeyas of bells tinkle in the breeze, asamkhyeyas of flowers are showered, asamkhyeyas of wreaths are swinging. . . ." These asamkhyeyas of flowers have fallen upon the earth, over the fields and woods and mountains. Everywhere they grow, poppies of Iceland, giant Himalayan lilies, sheets of delicate evening primroses upon the desert, narcissus upon the Alpine pastures, fuchsias on the slopes of Andean volcanoes, myriads of humble flowers by the roadside. And who can say which is the most beautiful? "The supremely pure splendour of the impartible essence illumines all things at once."

Did you ever see the Passion Flower? You know at once that it is a special and mystical creation.

> Oh ye who view the marvellous without surprise
> And know that a chaste virgin can tame unicorns
> Or a white hart appear, the Cross between his horns,
> Or gushing crystal waters from a rock arise,

Nor doubt that faith should bring to pass a miracle
Beside the marble shrine where some great saint lies dead,
Nor that a moon of light surrounds a holy head,
Now gaze with awe upon this lovely pentacle.

The Passion Flower here its mystic signs displays
Within the wide spread chalice of its open heart.
The Crown of Thorns shows in its purple-powdered rays,
Its stamens five are the five Wounds His flesh did part,
The three sharp Nails are the three styles borne uppermost,
The column is the Cross, the calix holds the sacred Host.

Did you ever watch the night-blooming cereus open in the southern moonlight? When the darkness falls, its tight buds begin to stir as though they felt the influence of the approaching moon. Slowly, slowly the rosette of white petals unfolds. One can see the petals move. When they have opened out, a cascade of pale stamens loosens itself, and the air is filled with perfume. All night long it hangs in amazing beauty, but with the day it closes up and dies. It is so strangely lovely that it seems to come from another planet, to be a heavenly visitant. What does it signify? When was it created and by Whom? To celebrate what love, sacrifice and triumph? To prefigure what paradise?

Then, there are the flowers of art. They are as numberless and as living as the flowers of the field and garden. There is the dandelion visited by a butterfly, painted by the Emperor Hui Tsung. He lost the half of his empire, but in his palace south of the Yellow River he painted such masterpieces as must cause the gods to forget his defeat. There are the oases of Persian miniatures. There are the pink-tipped daisies and harebells of illuminated Books of Hours. There are the "flowery meads" of wild strawberries, iris, pansies, daffodils and pinks in millefleur tapestries. Who can forget Dürer's little bunch of violets, or the pale roses which fall through the air in Botticelli's Birth of Venus?

One of the beautiful pictures of the West is the Wilton Diptich. It is thought by the authorities to be English. It was painted about 1396 for King Richard the Second. In one panel, the Virgin, surrounded by angels, holds up the Infant Jesus to receive the homage of the king. In the other, Richard himself is kneeling, accompanied by three saints. The Virgin is wrapped in a blue robe and all the little angels are dressed in blue. They have long wings shaded to dark blue which make a fringe against the gold sky. They are frail creatures, and their pale yellow curls are crowned with roses. One of them bears the pennant of St. George, a red cross on a white field. The infant Jesus, clad in a gold cloth, leans forward from His mother's arms to bless the king. The ground is strewn with flowers, large blue columbines and roses. The whole effect is of a celestial world of blue and gold. Richard, who kneels in the foreground of the second panel, has a heavy cloak of ruddy gold. On his head he wears the crown. His hands are raised in prayer. Behind him, against the gold sky, are the three patrons; first, St. John the Baptist, who clasps a lamb to his bosom with one arm, and touches Richard's shoulder with the other, as if encouraging him.

With him are two magnificent kings, St. Edward and St. Edmund. One, a majestic old man with a white beard, is clothed in cream-coloured velvet with ermine. He holds a ring. His sleeve, which shows as his mantle falls back, is a pure, light blue. This note, which recalls the blues of the other panel, is like a phrase of music. The second king is a younger man. He wears a cape of green lined with ermine and a rich robe of blue and gold brocade. He bears, as a sceptre, an arrow.

This picture, with its splendid harmonies of colour and rhythm, its style and poetry, is itself like a flower, the work of a long evolution, the incarnation of an idea. The reason why I think of it now is that one of its themes is the humility and obedience of the king. He is presented by his great patrons to the King of Heaven because he is simple, humble and desirous to obey. The angels of Heaven are crowned with flowers because they are obedient. . . . What has obedience to do with flowers? A very great deal. The plant grows because it obeys the law of its being. The sense of hearing of the plant is turned to listen to the voice of that law. In *The Secret Doctrine* we are told that plant consciousness corresponds to that of the Second Round, and, we may infer, to Buddhi, the Spiritual Will. Spiritual Will runs through plants like the flowing sap, and they offer it no resistance. They heed it and it alone. They struggle indomitably with the obstacles of weather, of rock or soil. They grow around the rock, they bend from the wind, they spring up in tiny crannies. And some of them, when they have succeeded, burst forth in a cry of triumph, a perfected work, a divine signature, a flower. There are climates where this impulse of manifestation is so strong that the plants threaten to overgrow everything, where giant lianas spring up over night, where one can see the vines fling out their tendrils, where one can hear the sound of this onrush of foliage. Writing of Ceylon, Carré describes a forest after rain, when violet and brown orchids and scarlet lilies burst out on the bushes. "Continuous creation, universal urge, *élan vital*, divinity everywhere dispersed and everywhere present, eternal Becoming."

The heat, the growth, the luxuriance of summer are the symbols of the ardent desire for material manifestation, when all the Powers, rushing forth, hasten to incarnate, and to express as perfectly as may be the limitless ideas of the One Being. As these Powers are mirrored and divided at the circumference of the circle—for us, the physical world—they turn to retrace their journey, to renew themselves once more in the source of all fire, Fount and Origin, *Fons et Origo*. Thus, when the impulse begins to recede, as the sun in our latitudes rolls away, and when the plant has carried out its plan as far as it can in one life-span, the leaves fall, the flowers fade, the winter comes. Splendidly glittering, the Winter Constellations rise in the night sky, like the turned page in the great illuminated book wherein the sages read. The year has been made in a revolving sphere that he who contemplates it may see that each season moves towards the other, all resolved in one motion.

With what pomp and magnificence the triumph of accomplishment is celebrated in our woods and fields. The leaves are red and gold, the fields are full

of golden rod, of asters, of purple ironweed and rosy violet eupatory. They are like the great Gothic cathedrals when their roofs were painted with lapis lazuli spangled with gold stars, and their columns were banded with colours; when tapestries hung on their walls and the windows flashed in coruscations of sapphire, emerald and ruby, like the wings of Archangels. The smoke of autumn bonfires is like incense. In the fields, upon the altar, and in the heart, men are called to celebrate the ritual of that Mass in which is figured Birth, Passion, Death and Resurrection.

Manifestation is not all creative joy. It is pain. It is crucifixion upon the mundane cross. For the flower, which obeys the creative command, the Divine Will, there is patience and peace. The sun may wither it or the rain beat it down, or the armies of the insect world assail it. It accepts all as part of its evolution, without talking about its "rights". But man, who has free will, refuses to think of himself as the vehicle of the Divine Life, as a creature destined to execute the purpose of the Creator. He refuses to think of himself as destined at all, even by his own sins. He is satisfied with himself, imperfect as he is, and wonders why any obstacles should lie in his path. He fancies he is outside the Laws of Nature. Therefore, he lives in a hell. The circles of the Inferno are built by man.

Where is the way of escape? How very simple. Even by considering the lilies of the field he may see the way. Nor has he been left without supreme Examples. There are those Great Ones who have carried out the desire of the Spiritual Will in themselves, who have incarnated the divine purpose, who have resolved the duality of the poles and attained the immortality of conscious union with that plan. Every Avatar has declared himself to be the Way.

"Therefore to the Essence which hath such privilege that whatsoever good be found outside of it is naught else save a light of its own ray, more than to any other must the mind needs move in love. . . ."

One of the greatest works of Western art is the Pietà of Avignon. Upon a dark and desolate plain, the Virgin, Mary Magdalen, and John, grieve over the body of Christ taken from the Cross. The Virgin, in the centre, prays over that body which lies upon her knees. St. John with one hand supports the head which even in death is surrounded by rays of light. The Magdalen, bearing the perfumed oil, kneels weeping by the feet. At the extreme left, the donor kneels, but he does not look at them, for they are in another world. He contemplates that vision in his heart. Contemplate here the sacrifice of the whole of the personal self. That which to man is the bitter end and sorrow, is to the spirit the return home and the Way of Resurrection.

Soon the trees will be bare, and the dried seedpods, empty of their fruit, will rattle in the cold winds. The flower fades, the body dies. The true form of the flower endures, the divine paradigm of man persists. Other plants and flowers will spring up to express that form. The soul of man will reincarnate to carry forward into ever-increasing completeness the nature of that paradigm. When the consciousness of man has raised itself to the understanding of the true significance of form, and has united itself with it, man will be an immortal.

Eckhart says: "God's purpose in the union of Contemplation is fruitfulness in works." So, in works, the divine purpose is the union of Contemplation.

It is our destiny and path which the whole of summer's effulgence and the splendour of the flowers are pointing out to us. Already the morning-glories are closing their trumpets under the heat of the sun, and the diamond garlands of the raindrops have evaporated. Soon, we too shall have vanished from the face of the earth, "gone five-wards", as the Hindus say of the dispersion of the physical body into the elements. There is "a fourth kind of Pralaya; the Nitya, or Constant Dissolution . . . the change which takes place imperceptibly in every thing in this universe from the globe down to the atom, without cessation. It is growth and decay—life and death." If this were all and nothing more, if our life were merely a brief flowering, so incomplete and imperfect, what would be the significance of this changing universe? No. Life is the constant striving of the Divine Being to incarnate itself fully in every atom. The raindrop which flashes back to the sun its refulgent colours, partakes of the nature of the sun and must return those rays. How shall we receive and partake of the mysteries of the occult Transubstantiation?

We have to follow, in our small cycle, the course of the greater. From the atom of the Spiritual Sun in our hearts the power of love must rise into our minds, there to image itself in self-conscious thought, and this, in turn, must be incarnated in the physical world in action. Then the fruit of action will return to us in contemplation, and we shall complete the cycle, not in the darkness of death, but awake. As we gradually incarnate the purposes of the Spiritual Will, they become our own, and we share the immortal Life and Intellect.

In form, then, of a white rose displayed itself to me that sacred soldiery which in his blood Christ made his spouse;
but the other, which, as it flieth, seeth and doth sing his glory who enamoureth it, and the excellence which hath made it what it is,
like to a swarm of bees which doth one while plunge into the flowers and another while wend back to where its toil is turned to sweetness,
ever descended into the great flower adorned with so many leaves, and reascended thence to where its love doth ceaseless make sojourn.

SAUVAGE.

There are vast worlds all placed away within the hollows of each atom, multifarious as the motes in a sunbeam.—YOGA VÂSISHTHA.

REMARKS BY THE WAY

KING George is dead. The whole world regrets it, and millions genuinely grieve. When he came to the throne he was regarded with indifference. His devoted and unselfish service, his integrity and sincerity, won him the extraordinary affection and respect which his Jubilee, and now his death, made so evident. A great loss. He had come to be regarded as a centre of stability in the chaos of recent years, and thus had fulfilled one of the primary functions of a King. Truly "humble of heart", his reliance on Divine Providence, combined with much common-sense, had given him the strength to carry a burden which the limitations of his authority must at times have made almost intolerable. He was not the man to wash his hands of moral responsibility, and yet he had been deprived of all power except that which his Ministers chose to concede to him. It is my belief, none the less, that during the Great War his quiet determination to "see the thing through" had contributed greatly to the Allied cause. Brought up in the Royal Navy, it was part of his creed to fight his ship until either it won or went to the bottom. For the example which he and Queen Mary set in their own home, as man and wife, as father and mother, it would be impossible to be too grateful. They hated immorality and vulgarity. One can only hope that the Queen will continue to exert the same influence, unimpeded.

Everyone must wish that the new King will leave as fine a record behind him. To use an old-time expression: may he grow in grace as in wisdom and dignity, and live to be blest by his people as his father was before him.

King George did not *seek* popularity; it came to him as a result of the respect he earned. It is greatly to be hoped that his son will refrain from trying "to sell himself" to the mob. Apart from other considerations, the mob, in the long run, always turns and rends those who pander to it.

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Rudyard Kipling's death is a sad loss also. He stood for certain principles which the world of to-day is ceasing to understand. He was a great creative artist, and although it may be said that his genius sometimes became muddied as it percolated through his brain, the fact remains that much of what he wrote will be quoted as long as English literature exists.

He was a Freemason with an uncommon understanding of the tenets of the Craft,—of tenets which echo the esotericism of by-gone ages. He worked for Brotherhood between East and West, by portraying the manhood, valour and chivalry, which he loved, and which he honoured whether met in the races of India or among his own people.

Every great artist is a seer, and Kipling was something of a prophet too. Years before the Great War he saw it coming, and saw Germany as the cause of it.

In every way possible he tried to prepare England and the Empire for the struggle, though, like most prophets, he warned deaf ears.

He understood and loved France and its people as few Englishmen do. It became the longing of his life that England and France should stand together in forceful defence of the ideals which, in their souls, both nations cherish. For he was a reader of souls, and was not deceived by appearances. He knew that the talk and squirmings of politicians are of the surface, not of the depths.

Really loving, of necessity he hated also,—totally unlike in this, as in so many other ways, those similitudes of men who pride themselves upon merging good and evil into a meaningless conceit.

Let us be thankful for his life, and for the record he left behind him.

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Speaking of Kipling reminds me, for reasons that will be obvious, of a statement I read recently in a book entitled *An Infant in Arms: War Letters of a Company Officer, 1914-1918*, by Graham H. Greenwell, M.C. The author writes objectively throughout, to speak in modern parlance; that is, without moralizing, without comment,—with this single exception. He is in the Italian Alps, facing the Austrians, some time after the disaster of Caporetto, when the French and English had hurried to the aid of Italy; and, as usual, he records his experience: "We are in colder regions now and the weather is absolutely poisonous. We got soaked on the march yesterday, but it only made the men more cheerful. It is always the same with them; it needs really rotten circumstances to get the best out of them."

There is the test both of men and nations, for, granting that the superior man, in the Confucian sense, can maintain himself at his best in prosperity and adversity alike, the good in the ordinary man would remain dormant for ever if it were not for hardships and suffering. It is only the worthless whom adversity crushes. From first to last in Kipling's writings he made this law of life clear, magnificently clear.

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The death of Paul Bourget is another outstanding event, for his influence in French literature was immense and will certainly endure. He was not only a great novelist; he was profound in his insight into human nature, human motives. Women have said that no one understood women as he did. Not always religious, he became so, intensely and fervently, as the result of his study of life. Perhaps one of his most helpful contributions to the data of ethics was the realization—exemplified so forcibly in his *Démon du Midi*—that whenever a man persists in violating his own conscience, he always ends by finding full justification for his conduct in some soothing misinterpretation of his religion. In other words, while the lives of the few are controlled by their religion, the many fit their religion to the pattern of their lives. This, of course, is just as true of Theosophists as of orthodox Christians, Buddhists or Hindus.

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An ornithologist connected with one of our American universities tells me that the feeding of wild birds on a large scale, in times of severe frost or drought, has

now been proved to be thoroughly destructive because the birds rapidly lose the ability to find food for themselves, and that the ability, once lost, is not recovered, so that they die of starvation by the thousand. Instead of migrating when they ought to do so, they wait to be fed. In one or more European countries, where ornithology and the care of wild birds are supervised by the government, laws have consequently been passed to prohibit what until recently was regarded not only as a kindness, but as the only way to preserve wild life.

At the same time I hear from friends in the middle West that small-town, self-respecting families, the members of which refused help a few years ago unless they were allowed to work for it, have now become so demoralized by government aid that they refuse work when it is offered to them, shamelessly asking why they should work when it is the "duty" of the government to support them.

The attempt of our politicians to supplant the laws of Nature, both biological and spiritual, will prove ruinous in more ways than one. Such folly, and vanity, remind one of their opposites,—the statement of Master K.H. as quoted in *The Occult World:* "we but follow and servilely copy Nature in her works", —and thus perform "miracles", he might have added.

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I have been reading, not the book itself, but a review of the latest book by Sir Norman Angell, *Raw Materials, Population Pressure and War*. Some of his writings have done great harm, but it appears that his present effort should dispose of the theory advocated by the late Frank Simonds and many others, that world-peace would result if Germany, Italy and Japan, the so-called "have-not" nations, were provided with colonies at the expense of nations possessing them. Angell refutes this theory on the strength of known facts. He points out, for instance, that in the Italian colony of Eritrea, there are only 84 Italians engaged in agriculture, and that only 90 Italian families could be persuaded to settle in Libya in 1934. Why assume, then, that thousands would flock to Ethiopia? Japan has owned Korea for twenty-five years and Formosa for nearly forty; yet very few Japanese have settled in either place. With some millions "on the dole" in Great Britain, most of whom, theoretically, might have overflowed with advantage to one or another of England's colonies or Crown possessions, "in the year 1934, twenty thousand *more* Britons returned from the overseas territories than went thereto." The problem of raw materials is dealt with in the same way, proving conclusively that Simonds's theory springs from the plane of Napoleon's *bête noire*, ideology, not from the world of fact.

It should be clear in any case, as I see it, that you can never satisfy a man who is a brigand both by nature and education: he will always want everything in sight. There is a caste or tribe in India which regards it as a social and religious duty to steal, and the peoples of Germany, Italy and Japan alike, have been brought up to believe that it is their god-given destiny to dominate and to possess whatever land they think they need. In that case, it is not stealing or brigandage: on the contrary, should anyone interfere, as England interfered with Germany in the Great War, or as England is considered to be interfering with Italy's rape of

Ethiopia, the would-be robber feels as if Righteousness itself were being infamously, wantonly outraged, in his person.

Part of the tragedy is that the world might have been at peace to-day if it had not been for England's mistakes since the war, for it was England who made the resurgence and re-armament of Germany possible, and who proved, to the delight of the wicked, but to the dismay of all who loved her and were not blind, that brigandage in its most brutal form can be forgiven and forgotten if this be thought expedient, and if that low motive be garnished with sentimental and senseless sympathy for the man, or nation, you have helped to subdue. Inevitably, the cost of this to England in the long run will be terrible—grievous to contemplate—and she will get no help from America, or so it seems; for our national self-centredness has been increased and is still increasing as a result of domestic policies which encourage it in the individual. "Do nothing for anybody and grab all you can", is almost certain to control our international relations, now that this has become the moral standard of so many (the voting many) of our citizens.

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Yet another self-proclaimed Initiate! I had hoped that Annie Besant and Leadbeater, having reduced this sort of thing to the lowest stages of absurdity, would have served as a reminder that the genuine Initiate is incapable of such claims, whether made directly or by insinuation. Paul Brunton, in *A Search in Secret India*, showed that he did not know the difference between psychic and spiritual attainment. The most superficial student could see that, when visiting yogîs of various kinds, he failed to discriminate between the real and the unreal. Psychic by nature, it was easy for his "Maharishee" in the south of India to impose upon him a state of consciousness which was accepted as a great spiritual illumination; and this, judging by his later book, *A Search in Secret Egypt*, appears to have had unfortunate, if inevitable, results. For him, it is no longer, "Thus have I heard", but, "Behold, I know!" And he treats all his psychic impressions as if they were revelations from on high. "I have been able to reconstruct", he writes, "both from my own experience [psychic visions] within the Pyramid, and from the evidences of wall carvings in the temples, the mysterious drama of *the innermost secret rite* of Osiris"! When a man writes like that, a student of Theosophy, unless quite new and green, is tempted to ejaculate, "Poor ass!" Then there are times when he becomes mysterious: "I shall throw out a hint", he says (p. 207), "in the form of a question, as to the principle involved in the secret meaning of hieroglyphs",—which he follows with a question which a boy might ask after listening to his first lecture on Egyptology. Finally, he of course meets an Adept, who declares himself to be an Adept, and who, following Mr. Brunton's own account of the interview, had him thoroughly hypnotized in about two minutes. The "Adept's" eyes were "large and lustrous". "As I talked to him, there crept over me an irresistible sensation of their duplex power, penetrative and hypnotic at the same time. They read my soul and *they then ruled it.* They drew from my mind some of its secrets and *they compelled me to remain passive before him*".

Hypnotists can do that with chickens. Adepts *of the White Lodge* do not do such things, either with chickens or men. They regard any interference with a man's free will, or with his freedom of thought, as a crime.

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To become a member of the Roman Catholic Church for me would be impossible. This involves no criticism of any student of Theosophy who is able to reconcile his theosophical beliefs with membership in that Church. Many of its dogmas are open to a mystical interpretation which Theosophy supplies; but there are other dogmas, such as that of Papal Infallibility (to mention only one), which defy both reason and experience. I must add that, speaking for myself as an individual, I find their misinterpretation of the doctrine of transubstantiation, revolting.

None the less, it is the duty and opportunity of a student of Theosophy to recognize and to be thankful for truth wherever he finds it, and, in my judgment, there is more genuine spirituality flowing to-day from Roman Catholic sources than from any other Church or religion. Much of their literature is marred, of course, by their "Mother of God" obsession (another tragic misunderstanding); but this can be ignored, and many of their books contain no reference to the subject. The best of them contain pure Bhakti Yoga—the Yoga, or Union, of Love—but with an understanding of the discipline involved which modern India has lost. The discipline, as all of us know, was given to us in such books as *Light on the Path* and *The Voice of the Silence*, while *Fragments*, by interpreting and re-interpreting these, in the light of first-hand experience, should leave us with no excuse for ignorance. Even so, a somewhat different or more detailed and elaborate exposition of the same truths, cannot fail to be helpful, and French Catholicism in particular supplies this with astonishing fecundity.

I am thinking for the moment of a book called *Recueillement* (sometimes translated as recollection, or as reflection; but perhaps better as indrawal), the author of which, A. D. Sertillanges, is a member of the Dominican Order. Our spirit, or understanding, he says, is intended to think and judge in the Spirit of God, much as a faithful dog reads the look in his master's face; and it soon becomes evident, as one reads Sertillanges, that this is the source of his own Theos-sophia.

No one understands better than he, the duality of human nature, or the complexity of the lower personal self. More than that, he knows that "things are but the frontiers of man" (surely a brilliant phrase), and knows, too, that Hugo was wrong when saying that the soul is great but that man is small; for it is the whole of man that is great, or will be, at the hour of man's apotheosis.

The spiritual star-gazer, he declares, frees himself from the gross things of life and from ephemeral desires,—which is something to the good; but the star-gazer forgets that what we regard as trifles have their relation with the All, and acquire, by that within them which is eternal, a tragic importance.

What meaning has our life, he asks, unless it be an effort to change our innermost desires into realities; and whence these innermost desires unless stamped upon us by the impulsion of the primal Cause?

Destiny is the excuse of the feeble and the work of the strong, he quotes; then

adds: do not look for excuses, for with God we can always be strong and create our own destiny.

There is scarcely a page in the book that does not shine with some truth of Theosophy; but I am not extolling a book as exceptional; I am maintaining that the Catholic approach to things to-day is more truly theosophical, in important respects, than most students of Theosophy realize. No other church in America has done as much to combat filthiness on the stage and in the "movies"; while its fight against divorce, birth control, and similar degeneracies has been fearless and unremitting.

Take as a further illustration, the question of education. Not long ago I bought a book by Father Vincent McNabb, the poet, for his essay on Francis Thompson: delightful reading. Then, looking at other essays in the same volume, I found one which quoted a statement given out by the Roman Catholic Archbishops and Bishops of England and Wales in 1929, covering the "principles which underlie the Catholic attitude on Education",—as follows:

"(1) It is no part of the *normal* function of the State to *teach*.

"(2) The State is entitled to see that citizens receive due education sufficient to enable them to discharge the duties of citizenship in its various degrees.

"(3) The State ought, therefore, to encourage every form of sound educational endeavour, and may take means to safeguard the efficiency of education.

"(4) To parents whose economic means are insufficient to pay for the education of their children, it is the duty of the State to furnish the necessary means, providing them from the common funds arising out of the taxation of the whole community. But in so doing the State must not interfere with parental responsibility, nor hamper the reasonable liberty of parents in their choice of a school for their children. Above all, where the people are not all of one creed, there must be no differentiation on the ground of religion.

"(5) Where there is need of greater school accommodation the State may, in default of other agencies, intervene to supply it; but it may do so only 'in default of, and in substitution for, and to the extent of, the responsibility of the parents' of the children who need this accommodation.

"(6) The teacher is always acting *in loco parentis*, never *in loco civitatis*, though the State, to safeguard its citizenship, may take reasonable care to see that teachers are efficient.

"(7) Thus a teacher never is and never can be a civil servant, and should never regard himself or allow himself to be so regarded. Whatever authority he may possess to teach and control children, and to claim their respect and obedience, comes to him from God, through the parents, and not through the State, except in so far as the State is acting on behalf of the parents."

There could hardly be a clearer statement of theosophical principles on this subject; nor a more direct contradiction of the theories upon which Socialism, Bolshevism, Fascism, Hitlerism, alike are based. Further, as Father McNabb proceeds to point out:—

"In saying that 'it is no part of the normal function of the State to teach', the [Roman Catholic] Bishops have enunciated a principle of wider scope than

mere education. There is a group of political thinkers whose doctrine is that the best State is the one which exercises the greatest number of functions. In other words, the State has the moral power to do all that it has the physical power to do. Of course, this is the old false principle: 'Might is Right'."

This should make it clear that the protagonists of the New Deal in America are among those whose theories are thus flatly challenged.

Part of the explanation is that the Church of Rome, with few exceptions, stands by the philosophy of St. Thomas Aquinas; the Protestant Churches have no philosophy; the Buddhists and Hindus have so many philosophies that they do not know what to do with them, while the philosophies of Fascism, Hitlerism, Bolshevism, Socialism and the New Deal are thoroughly materialistic, and must prove themselves, in time, to be self-destructive.

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Postscript.

The QUARTERLY was almost ready to go to press when Germany, by sending troops into the demilitarized zone of the Rhineland, once again treated her written promise as "a scrap of paper". At the same time she offered another written promise—a peace pact to last for twenty-five years. And there are leading statesmen in England and elsewhere, who urge France and Belgium, thus threatened, to regard Germany's promises as guaranteeing security! It would be incredible if it were not for the record of the past fifteen years. Some people learn nothing and never will.

Prime Minister Baldwin, in the House of Commons, speaks of Germany as having touched "all the most delicate, raw susceptibilities of the French". If a man were to point a loaded revolver within two inches of Mr. Baldwin's nose, and a so-called friend, instead of striking the revolver out of the man's hand, were gently to protest against this affront to Mr. Baldwin's "susceptibilities", raw or otherwise, I doubt if Mr. Baldwin would feel, either that his case had been adequately stated, or that his security had been guaranteed.

Mr. Eden is in terror lest the League of Nations should collapse. It is a thousand pities that it was ever brought into being. It was the psychic, premature anticipation of something for which the world may be ready in a million years. Congress is a miniature League of Nations (States), and it is notorious that the representatives of the forty-eight States, instead of thinking of the welfare of the whole, think, first, of their personal interests, secondly, of the interests of their States, and only then, if at all, of the general welfare. And Americans, morally, are not inferior, so far as I can see, to Europeans. In Congress, votes are "traded" quite openly: "If you will support me here, I will support you there." Principles are almost unknown. Inevitably, at this stage of human evolution, the same is true of the League of Nations, although the procedure is not always quite so crude.

"The law of the jungle is the alternative", it is said. But it is the law of the jungle, and no other, which controls to-day, and the League of Nations merely aggravates that condition.

All that Theosophy pleads for is a recognition of the facts, of the Truth. Theosophy hates pretence and wanton self-deception. It refuses to call a brigand who prides himself on being a brigand, a normal man, and it refuses to pretend that the normal man is a saint. It knows that the normal man, the vast majority of men, are self-seeking, and that this is true of nations, practically without exception. But a nation like France seeks security and peace; a nation like Soviet Russia seeks domination for her detestable ideas, and, in that way, rather than by conquest, the enlargement of her sphere of influence. Germany and Italy are seeking the enlargement of their territories, the material domination of peoples, the magnification of their own sense of importance. America does not care how many brigands are threatening the world, so long as they do not interfere with her; for she is seeking money, or, perhaps (for her aims are nebulous) the "high standards of living" which money is supposed to provide—and does not provide.

It would be better if the League of Nations, whose existence only beclouds the issue, were to be disbanded. This would help statesmen to deal with facts, which they loathe, and might release them from the world of dreams. Meanwhile France, which has also been wedded to the League nostrum, has appealed to it for help against Germany's latest violation of her engagements; otherwise France, which feels bound by her word, as Germany does not, could and should have sent her armies straight into the Rhineland, to drive out the troops which Germany has sent there, and to retain possession of it, with the Rhine or beyond it as frontier, in spite of the shocked disapproval of those who *pretend* still to pin their faith to "scraps of paper".

No student of Theosophy can be of service to humanity until he has learned to distinguish between psychic fancy and spiritual perception, between "ideology" and illumined common-sense, between the real and the unreal, between "psychic and noëtic action". The dreamer argues in this way:—it is terrible that tigers should kill to eat; tigers ought to live on bread-and-milk; they would do so if they were treated properly, with kindliness; therefore dot the jungle with bread-and-milk in pails, and tigers will become gentle and friendly, gambolling with the deer in the sunshine. When common-sense (and *nous* used to be the schoolboy colloquialism for common-sense), when the man who, though his heart may be in heaven, still has his feet on earth, points out that this sort of thing was used as a symbol of the millennium, but was never suggested as an ideal for to-morrow,—the ideologist, with an eye like an ichthyophthalmite (see the dictionary!), is either irritated or grieved by such lack of appreciation, and works all the harder to convince the world that his utopianism is sound sense.

There is a type of wiseacre, however, who is perhaps more dangerous than the addle-pated dreamer: I am thinking of the man who has "been there", who "knows". Many of them write books. They cite their own experience and observation, and thus base their conclusions upon "facts", unable or unwilling to see that their facts are far too few to make sound conclusions possible. Figuratively, they declare a man to be good because he has blue eyes and a square jaw, and was polite to them when they asked their way. They know

nothing of his past, nothing of his behaviour except through their superficial contact with him. Thus, some young man, perhaps a medical student, will make a tour through Germany on his bicycle. He admires the hardworking peasants, and is grateful for the friendly treatment he receives from everyone he encounters. He writes a book about his experience, reporting his facts faithfully; but his personal reactions are misleading, and his conclusions are all wrong, because he knows nothing of Germany's past, nothing of the German nature when acting collectively. He knows nothing of the racial mediumship, of the hysteria, the madness, which literally takes possession of a German crowd under the influence of a "spell-binder" who flatters them, and who deliberately plays upon their emotions with the aid of military bands and the wild shouting of patriotic songs. Their leaders use hypnotism in all its forms to produce the desired effect,—an insanity of personal and national egotism. A timid, kindly "baker or candlestick-maker", will leave such a meeting, swollen to the bursting-point, drunk with the conviction that because he is a German he is a *Held*, a hero, a lion among men, and that the rest of the world exists but to be subjected to his race of super-men. There are exceptions—always there are some exceptions—but the vast majority of Germans look back upon their performance during the Great War, from the violation of Belgium's neutrality to the sinking of the Irish cross-channel passenger *S. S. Leinster*, in October, 1918, not only as justifiable, but as noble beyond compare. Addressing a large party of American editors, visiting England, on the day this last-named German exploit became known, the quiet Arthur Balfour declared: "Brutes they were and . . . brutes they remain"—a pronouncement greeted with a storm of applause—applause conveniently forgotten by most of those who were present —and filling those whom he condemned with a further sense of their own indubitable superiority.

England, we are told, is not ready, is not sufficiently armed; but whose fault is that! And does a brave man, when a friend's life is threatened, try to excuse inaction on any such grounds? Or is the brave man, in this case, still shell-shocked and shattered? England, in the Great War, suffered terribly. But she did not suffer as France and Belgium suffered, and they have not lost their nerve.

The worship of comfort, the craving for "prosperity", the fear of pain, the dread of death, and the softening of the moral fibre which these low aims and fears entail,—these are the evils which are sapping the manhood of the English-speaking world, more so in America than in England, but in England, at this moment, with tragic and appalling effect, obvious to civilized humanity. For, once again, Germany would not have dared if she had had reason to expect uncalculating fearlessness.

Is it too late to hope that England, even at this eleventh hour, will meet the armed bully with naked fists if necessary, but with that faith in the power of righteousness, with that white heat of indignation, which are invincible even in hell, and which never fail to cow a bully into submission?

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REVIEWS

The Spirit of Man in Asian Art, by Laurence Binyon; Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1935; price, $4.00.

This is one of those rare and beautiful books which one reads slowly because one does not want to finish it but to savour it and to hoard one's enjoyment. Dr. Binyon, "Sometime Keeper of Prints and Drawings in the British Museum", is well known to students of Oriental art. He speaks not only with the authority of scholarship, but with that of a profound understanding, sympathy and sensibility. One feels that one is listening to a master of the subject. Sometimes, indeed, we seem not to be reading this book at all, but to be looking with new eyes upon the works of art themselves, and to be living in that atmosphere of spiritual perception, contemplation and intense feeling which produced them. No other work which we have read on the subject conveys so completely and exquisitely this impression. Those who only know Western art will discover that it throws light upon its peculiar qualities, and those who are not particularly interested in any art will, nevertheless, find it full of illuminating ideas. It is profusely illustrated with reproductions of some of the most beautiful examples of Asian art.

Dr. Binyon speaks first of the wonderful early bronzes of China and of the paintings of Ku K'ai-chih. He then takes up the fresco art of India at Ajanta and Bagh, the sculpture of the Gupta period, the Greek influences of Gandhara, and their effects, through Buddhism, upon China and Japan. In the Sung period, when Buddhism and the native Chinese mysticism of the Tao came together in Zen, Chinese painting attained its most sublime heights.

Hollowness, emptiness—these are words, these are ideas, from which our instincts recoil; they are repugnant. But Lao-tzu makes friends with the idea of Space, he makes it companionable; he dwells on the uses of emptiness. "Clay is moulded into a vessel; the utility of a vessel depends on its hollow interior. Doors and windows are cut out in order to make a house; the utility of the house depends on the empty spaces. Thus, while the existence of things may be good, it is the non-existent in them which makes them serviceable." At once we find ourselves seeing things from a fresh angle. There is a picture called "Listening to Music", attributed, perhaps rightly, to a figure-painter who flourished at the end of the eighth century. It is hard to think of any Western painting in which the empty spaces are made as significant as they are here: one would almost say even more significant than the figures. The intervals seem brimmed with a listening silence. You feel that the artist dwelt on them, so as to draw out their eloquence. It is, so to speak, space spiritualized.

We must quote, also, from the chapter on Persian art, where the differences between Chinese and Persian mysticism are described with keen delicacy.

On a summer night, driving in an automobile, have you not sometimes been startled and thrilled by the apparition of wayside flowers and grasses suddenly isolated and luminous in the beams of the headlamps? A moment ago there was darkness; now with each stem and petal delicately distinct, they seem to have something unearthly in their beauty. Can they really have been there in the dark with all that intricate profusion of form and colour? You feel as if they had suddenly been created for you yourself. . . . In our own day this peculiar vein of feeling is present, I think, in the paintings of Vincent Van Gogh; for him not only sunflower and iris but a straw-bottomed chair, a pair of old boots, could be illuminated with a light that never was, enriching not only the senses but the inward eye.

I showed you in my last lecture a Chinese picture of a Buddhist mystic, a woman, straying on a forlorn shore in the dead of winter, seeking for the Absolute in essential solitude. Very different externally, yet essentially akin, is the Persian poet among the spring flowers in their incredible beauty. The one is for immersing herself in "the world wherein no creature dwelleth" (to use the phrase of Boehme), the world within oneself; the other "sees the world in a grain of sand, and a heaven in a wild flower". An intoxication of the senses merges into an intoxication of the spirit.

The chapters on Japanese art show the same acute penetration of the peculiarly intense nature of the race.

At the outset I should like to dwell for a moment on this propensity to carry things to extremity, to sacrifice everything else to the chosen aim, which I think is characteristic of the race and which sometimes will appear to us almost fantastic, almost terrifying. . . . Now there is a story of a Japanese woman weeping on a battlefield over the bodies of her dead sons; to someone who sought to comfort her she replied: "I do not weep because I have lost them, I weep because I have no more sons to give." . . . There is a sort of absolute quality in the Japanese loyalty to a cause or idea. Probably in the history of the world there has never been a race so heroic, I mean so possessed by the spirit which is ready to dare all and endure all, regardless of consequence, in the cause which it has chosen. Though this spirit is manifested most strikingly in the world of action, it is present also in the world of ideas, and in art.

However, we cannot quote all of the book. We can only urge that it be read and enjoyed for itself.

St.C. LaD.

Joan of Arc, by Milton Waldman; Little, Brown & Company, 1935; price, $3.00.

The author is rather a good story-teller, is most sympathetic toward Joan of Arc, and has unbounded admiration for her as a woman of extraordinary ability and cleverness. He feels that she has never been shown in her true light. "Posterity has awarded her everything and more, that her judges tried to take from her, except of course her life. . . . But even posterity has failed to restore . . . her common ordinary humanity. She rides down the ages as a bronze image on a horse, with a sword held high in one hand and a pennon in the other, like nothing that ever lived; so each generation receives her and reverently

passes her on."' Deploring the fact that she had to "rely on the conscientious pens of her enemies' scribes to acquit her of the pious slanders of her friends and let her be seen as she was", he takes the record of the trial as his source (supplemented by a long bibliography) and, sifting out the true from the false, attempts to make her live again—in "her common ordinary humanity". Some aspects of her character are well portrayed, and there are welcome touches such as: "A quite satisfactory number of men and women have stood trial for their lives with courage; a good few have done so displaying a high order of intelligence; it is hard to think of anyone but Socrates and Joan of Arc who did so with gay humour." The military portion of the story and also the trial are presented in a swift narrative that holds the attention well, but to the mystical aspect of his subject he brings little or no understanding. His strictures on mediæval ecstatics and visionaries ("that ridiculous, pathetic, repulsive crew" with whom Joan had nothing in common), show not only his perhaps justifiable distaste for the abuses of the mediæval religious system, but equally his ignorance of the reality behind it. With all his desire to present Joan in her true greatness, then, his understanding inevitably falls short. At times he seems convinced that she was divinely inspired, though how he accounts for certain phenomena is not always clear. Two of his many comments on the Voices are indicative: "Until inquiry and proof have brought such things as Joan's visions within the laws of physical cause and effect, we shall find it impossible to believe that she really spoke with, saw, touched, and smelt saints out of Paradise as she claimed. We must assume that her visions were subjective to her before they can become comprehensible to us, for so our minds are now made." . . . "As to their appearance, she never gave a straight answer, and for the simple reason that she was unable to. She had identified her visitors by an inward prompting based upon deep psychological processes that can be traced to the legends she had been taught and the sculptured likenesses she had so long and intently gazed upon. Those effigies had given body so to speak, to the figments of her imagination."

The result is almost inevitable. From even a partially materialistic standpoint what explanation can there be of that tragic death, following the promise of deliverance, except the one he apparently intends: "the truth dawned upon her that they [the Voices] had betrayed her"? To many readers this can only mean a failure on the author's part to grasp the real and supreme achievement of that valorous life and heroic death. The book is marred by colloquialisms ill suited to a biography of mediæval times, and by references to matters of sex of a kind that are unpardonable. The reader is left chiefly with the feeling that the author's entire sincerity and very laudable intention outdistance his understanding and capacity to handle such a subject.

J.C.

The Philosophy of Spinoza, by Harry Austryn Wolfson, Nathan Littauer Professor of Jewish Literature and Philosophy in Harvard University; Harvard University Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 1934; price, $7.50.

Spinoza and Buddha: Visions of a Dead God, by S. M. Melamed; University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1933; price, $3.

The student of Spinoza's *Ethics* often suspects that what he is reading is an index to the philosopher's thought rather than an exposition of it. The austere geometrical form which Spinoza adopted, gives logical coherence and unity, but it is not conducive to fluency or expansiveness. Inevitably one speculates concerning the sentiments and ideas which he did not reveal, but which may be surmised as the justification and substratum of his public work. Why was he so restrained, so reticent? The usual explanation is that he was silent about many things, because it was imprudent in the Seventeenth Century to expound too openly any religious views which public opinion might regard as too heterodox.

Professor Wolfson suggests another reason which is more convincing. Spinoza was not an isolated phenomenon. He was a representative of a long philosophical tradition. He meditated upon problems which had stimulated men's minds for centuries, problems which were still cast in the form which Aristotle had given them. Like Giordano Bruno and Descartes, Spinoza was attracted by the "new learning", and by the revolution that was progressing in physical science, but above all he was inspired by a passion for pure metaphysics, as defined by mediæval thought. He could not desist from the quest of those truths which lie beyond the range of ordinary experiment and which show forth the essence of God, the relation between God and the world, the nature of man and the path of divine wisdom. In his search he examined the conclusions of those who had preceded him in this way. Gradually he built a system of his own, selecting and rejecting, criticizing and adapting. Sometimes he virtually incorporated fragments of old texts, as Shakespeare embodied in his dramas long passages that had been composed by others. As has been said, Spinoza was the last and greatest of the scholastic philosophers. He clarified the work of generations of theologians and metaphysicians. Certainly much that is obscure becomes clear, if we recognize that Spinoza thought of himself as a commentator on the wisdom of his predecessors. He was addressing a public familiar with the technical language which he used, and did not believe it to be necessary to explain in detail what he was talking about.

Professor Wolfson has proved what has hitherto been only surmised,—the indebtedness of Spinoza to the Moorish and Jewish philosophers of the Spanish peninsula, and through them to the Aristotelian and Neoplatonic schools which flourished in the Near East under Moslem protection during the European Dark Age that preceded the dawn of mediæval civilization. Scholars have generally admitted that Arabic philosophy was the immediate progenitor of the scholastic metaphysics which became so characteristic a feature of mediæval Christianity. However, though Avicenna and Averroes have been studied and translated, their Jewish successors have been neglected. Professor Wolfson's work in this forgotten field is, therefore, of the greatest value. He has made available in translation, with admirable commentaries, much of this Spanish-Jewish philosophical literature, which in large measure exists only in scattered manuscripts,

but which constitutes an integral part of the metaphysical and mystical tradition of the West. The quotations from these Hebrew sources are sufficient in themselves to give distinction to his work on Spinoza, quite irrespective of his thesis. For all but a few, Maimonides, Crescas, Gersonides, Ibn Ezra, Ibn Gabirol, have been only names. In these pages, they begin to live again.

We do not fully agree with Dr. Wolfson's final evaluation of Spinoza's doctrines. He argues that Spinoza, by "four acts of daring", fundamentally altered the traditional teaching.

> By declaring that God has the attribute of extension as well as of thought, Spinoza has thus removed the break in the principle of the homogeneity of nature. . . . By denying design and purpose in God, [he] removed the break in the principle of the uniformity of the laws of nature. . . . [His] insistence upon the complete inseparability of soul from body has . . . removed another break in the uniformity of nature. . . . [His] insistence upon the elimination of freedom of the will from human actions has . . . removed another break in the uniformity of the laws of nature.

Other philosophers have insisted with equal force upon the homogeneity of Nature; others have identified Nature with a substance whose "essence involves existence", that is, with God; others have denied freedom of the will, in the ordinary sense, to God as well as to man. The real problem is to ascertain what Spinoza meant when he affirmed these things. We may approach an understanding of his intent, if we assume that he was not merely a philosopher who speculated, but was primarily a mystic who *experienced* what he taught. The key to his doctrine is found, we believe, in his conclusion that the inmost self, the higher mind of man, is "a part of the infinite intellect of God", and that the human mind participates, therefore, in the only possible kind of freedom, the full freedom of expression which distinguishes immortal from mortal being. Nothing external to itself can curb the higher mind's power to make manifest its essence, to become that which it is its nature to become. The tragedy of man is that he does not exercise this liberty, but allows himself to fall under the dominion of necessity, where he is the slave of whatever emotion happens to be dominant at any given instant. According to such an interpretation, when men turn to evil instead of to good, it is not because they choose evil but because, deluded by emotion and self-will, and stupefied by ignorance and inertia, they fail to *identify* themselves with that which is their good. "The more perfection anything has, the more active and the less passive it is; and contrariwise, the more active it is, the more perfect it becomes. . . . Blessedness is not the reward of virtue, but virtue itself: nor should we rejoice in it for that we restrain our desires, but, on the contrary, because we rejoice therein we can restrain our desires."

In many ways, Spinoza's pantheism resembles the great systems of thought which were born in ancient India and China,—the Vedanta, the Sankhya, Buddhism, Taoism. This resemblance is, in fact, the theme of *Spinoza and Buddha*, by Dr. Melamed. The author, however, has very peculiar views, the most peculiar of all being that Spinoza, like Buddha, his Oriental prototype, was an enemy of the human race. The *Brahma* of the Indian mystics, and the *Deus* of

Spinoza are "dead gods", according to Dr. Melamed, and he contrasts them, to their supposed disadvantage, with the "living god", the Jehovah of the Old Testament. He does not understand how a God who is immanent in the world can also be transcendent, in the sense that He is not the world, though His attributes are made manifest in and through the world. A God who is identified with Nature or Eternal Substance is "dead", according to Dr. Melamed's definition, because he cannot imagine what sort of consciousness He can have. No more can any other human personality form an image of that divine consciousness; but what possible difference can this make? Such consciousness as we have, must have come from somewhere, and what other source can there be save the Nature or Essence of all things, the One Self, God. Unless one frankly adopts a materialistic theory of consciousness, there is only one alternative to this proposition, and that is to assume that God is a being distinct from and even hostile to the general order of Nature, and that the men whom He made in His image are essentially unnatural entities, as "extra-cosmic" as their creator. This appears to be Dr. Melamed's assumption. A quotation may make his point of view more intelligible.

> Buddhism negates life, Judaism affirms it. The negation of life is a symptom of decadence, for healthy races cling tenaciously to it. . . . The tropical sun and the jungle destroyed [man's] appetite for it, for they annihilated in him the courage to fight and the will to live. . . . Out of this deterioration arose the lifeless and anonymous universalism of the East. The man who emerged from the jungle denied life, while he who came out of the desert affirmed it. . . . The ancient Jews became individualistic to the same extent that the Eastern Aryans grew universalistic. . . . In the Upanishads man is not visible, and we hear only his cosmic wails and lamentations. . . . The personal, living God of the Bible is only a correlation to its living, passionate and powerful man. The universal and dead God of the Upanishads is equal in reality to its dead universalism. Out of the jungle crawled a dead God, and out of the desert roared a living God.

There are so many illusions packed in these sentences that any analysis must be hopelessly inadequate. However, we venture to suggest that the principal illusion is one shared by the whole of unredeemed mankind. It is the illusion that the human personality is an end in itself, a powerful and living being, a thing to be worshipped with self-satisfaction and pride. The "life" which Buddhism negates is not the life of the physical body as such, nor is it the life of divinity; it is "psychic" life, the vital force that we attribute to the human personality which has been defined as *the image of the body in the mind.* If this be pessimism, so be it; but what sort of optimism can that be which depends for the verification of its dreams upon the triumph of the "old Adam" in man, over all the obstacles which a beneficent Nature places in the way of the soul's descent into hell. S.V.L.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

QUESTION NO. 397.—*Would not Theosophists regard the Gospel according to St. John as the nearest to the Divine Wisdom of them all? Edmond Holmes, in his "Creed of Christ", does not seem to agree. Is this an instance of a wise man nodding?*

ANSWER.—Theosophy is the key to a true understanding of the great Scriptures of the world. Where that knowledge is lacking, one may find great insight on many points, but almost always accompanied by definite limitations in other directions. Mr. Holmes's books are very valuable, particularly his *Creed of Buddha*, but his limitations are marked. When he finds that the statements of Christ recorded in the Gospel of St. John are not in accordance with his own ideas, instead of trying to enlarge and deepen his view, he questions the authenticity of the Gospel. In his case, as in all others, one should gain all one can from his insight and let the rest go. In fairness to him, however, we must remember that Biblical scholarship periodically discredits the alleged authorship, and even the genuineness, of the fourth Gospel.

Perhaps we should add that few students of Theosophy would undertake to say which of two statements made by a great Master was "the nearest to Divine Wisdom", to rank, for example, Christ's statement in the fourteenth, fifteenth and sixteenth chapters of St. John, above or below the Sermon on the Mount as recorded by St. Matthew. To do so would, among other things, be to imply that one understood either Gospel fully, something that no one short of an Adept could do. J.F.B.M.

ANSWER.—One of the fundamentals of the theosophical philosophy is that Truth is limited and incomplete if defined or if expressed in one set of terms. The Gospels all contain revelations of the Divine Wisdom, which must be the case in view of their record of the words and acts of a great Avatar. The Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles reveal many aspects of the Divine Wisdom, as, for example, in the writings of St. Paul, who was an Initiate. St. John had knowledge of the Logos Doctrine, not, perhaps, possessed by the other disciples; in addition, he was known as the beloved disciple, which relationship involved close contact with his Master in the real sense, and his account of the Last Supper reveals a deep understanding of his Master's heart.

While the Gospel of St. John discloses facets of the Truth that the other Gospels do not, it is important to remember that Truth must be approached from all sides, and that one view of it is necessarily incomplete. G.H.M.

ANSWER.—I should think that, not only students of Theosophy, but all intuitive students of the Bible as well, would regard the Gospel of St. John as the nearest to the Divine Wisdom. The first three Gospels are known as the Synoptic Gospels, because of their similitude in contents, words and, even, phrasing; and because, combined, they present a general and harmonized story of Christ's life. This grouping of the first three, may tend to influence people, some scholars included, to attach less importance than it deserves to the fourth Gospel. The Synoptic Gospels, in the main, record Christ's sayings, and the events of his life. The Gospel of St.

John deals more with the purpose and plan of his incarnation, with the *spirit* of it. I should say that students of Theosophy would regard the Synoptic Gospels, valuable as they are, as more or less representative of the "eye" doctrine; and that of St. John as representative of the "heart" doctrine. The last book in the Bible, known as The Revelation of St. John the Divine, should reinforce that opinion; so, too, should a study of his life at Patmos, for St. John's disciples make it evident that they knew he continued to receive the personal teaching of Christ, long after Christ's withdrawal from the world. One of these disciples, Polycarp, taught Irenæus, who was Bishop of southern France from 175 to 202. Harnack, the theologian, commenting on a letter in which Irenæus refers to the time he was in Lower Asia with Polycarp, writes: "These are priceless words, for they establish a chain of tradition (Jesus, John, Polycarp, Irenæus) which is without parallel in history." It is to be regretted that Christian peoples have not informed themselves more fully about St. John's influence; about the way in which the tradition of Patmos was carried from southern France to Iona of Scotland, and, thence, into Northumbria, in England; for it is St. John, and not St. Peter, "who is the father of the French and the British Churches". G.M.W.K.

ANSWER.—Nearest of all the Gospels to the Divine Wisdom? Possibly. Although the degree of Truth which can be derived from any one of the Gospels does not necessarily depend wholly upon the illumination of its author, but in large measure upon the understanding and intuition of the reader. Or does the question perhaps mean that St. John, as he revealed himself in that Gospel, was the nearest of all those lesser figures in the New Testament to a complete grasp of the Divine Wisdom? Surely, on Patmos, whether in the body or out of the body, he rose to great heights of insight and vision, when he listened to that voice which was as the sound of many waters, to those sayings which were faithful and true. But of all those lesser figures it is St. Paul, that great Initiate, who tells us the most of the wisdom and love and power of the Father; of how to carry that essence of the Divine into the spiritual combat of daily life and living; of how the Spirit of the Warrior, which he exemplified, can be made ours. It is the Divine Wisdom which St. Paul gives us, in full measure, pressed down and running over.
C.R.A.

IN MEMORIAM.

THEODORA DODGE

A valued and devoted member of The Theosophical Society, and a brilliant and most helpful contributor to the "Theosophical Quarterly".

Died, 1st February, 1936

T·S·ACTIVITIES

NOTICE OF CONVENTION

THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

To the Branches of The Theosophical Society:

1. The Annual Convention of The Theosophical Society will be held at 64, Washington Mews, New York, on Saturday, April 25th, 1936, beginning at 10:30 a. m.

2. Branches unable to send delegates to the Convention are requested to send proxies. These may be made out to the Secretary T. S., or to any officer or member of the Society who is resident in New York or is to attend the Convention. These proxies should state the number of members in good standing in the Branch.

3. Branch Secretaries are asked to send their annual reports to the Secretary T. S. These reports should cover the significant features of the year's work and should be accompanied by a complete list of officers and members, with the full name and address of each; also a statement of the number of members gained or lost during the year; also a record of the place and time of Branch meetings. These reports should reach the Secretary T. S. by April 1st.

4. Members-at-large are invited to attend the Convention sessions; and all Branch members, whether delegates or not, will be welcome.

5. Following the custom of former years, the sessions of the Convention will begin at 10:30 a. m. and 2:30 p. m.

6. On Sunday, April 26th, at 4 p. m., tea will be served at 64, Washington Mews, to delegates, members, and their friends.

ISABEL E. PERKINS,
Secretary, The Theosophical Society,
P. O. Box 64, Station O, New York, N. Y.

February 15th, 1936.

NOTICE OF MEETINGS

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64, Washington Mews, which runs from the east side of Fifth Avenue, midway between Eighth Street and Washington Square, North. No. 64 is the first studio east of Fifth Avenue, on the north side of the Mews. The meetings begin at half-past eight, and close at ten o'clock. There will be meetings on,—

April 4th and 18th, May 2nd.

Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York. Visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.